

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE



1. Out of the emptiness of the gourd (i.e. the void) comes the phantasmagoria of the universe (the troupe of acrobats)

This picture by Hakuin is evidently based on two things. An old Chinese legend about a dragon coming out of a gourd, and the appearance in Japan of a troupe of Korean acrobats

The Embossed Tea Kettle

ORATE GAMA
AND OTHER WORKS OF

HAKUIN ZENJI

THE ZEN REFORMER OF THE EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY IN JAPAN

The mystic words O RA TE seem to have been embossed on Hakuin's Tea Kettle. He faced them daily as he meditated and wrote. He chose them as the Title of his principle popular Work.

Translated from the Japanese
BY R. D. M. SHAW, D.D.

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FOREWORD

IN respect of the current impact of Zen on the West, it has been said that never before have so many evinced such interest in anything so little understood¹ However, these many occidental Zen devotees are perhaps not altogether to blame for their ignorance For this Chinese-Japanese 'ultra self-power wing of Buddhism'—as it has been called²—is actuated by a paradoxical doctrine, essentially simple, yet difficult to grasp By its very nature, it eludes clear-cut definitions For it seems that in order to attain its central goal, Satori, Enlightenment, or Intuition Awakening, it must be lived and not read Every attempt, therefore, to communicate this spiritual experience coherently in writing or speech must necessarily miscarry. Such an approach to religion and philosophy is perhaps not immediately congenial to the Western mind According to Professor Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, Zen is altogether beyond the ken of human understanding Its uniqueness lies in its irrationality, its passing beyond logical comprehension The normal rationalistic common sense view of things has apparently no use in evaluating its truth or untruth³ And, indeed, its difficulty lies perhaps in the intellectual inability to transcend the intellect which, according to Zen is a pre-requisite for the realization of absolute reality in one's own life In the wake of Indian Mahayana Buddhism Zen draws radical conclusions from the fundamental doctrine that there is no 'essential' difference between Nirvana and Samsara, between Absolute and Phenomenal Empirical Reality, or in other words that they are neither identical nor different If the former transcends the categories of space, time and discursive thought, and thus is impredicable and inexpressible this must, in essence hold for the latter too Hence, in terms of its transmission the problem of Zen is the expression of the 'Inexpressible' which can be better achieved by the suggestive power of art than by philosophical statements On the other hand inasmuch as Nirvana is identical with Buddhahood, all beings are primordially endowed with the Buddha Nature, entailing absolute freedom Owing to the limitations of mere rational thought, we fail to realize this in ourselves Zen therefore, is the way from bondage to freedom It is the art of seeing into the nature of one's own being by penetrating into the very depths of inner spiritual truth This is the object of the Zen discipline with its enigmatic, seemingly paradoxical, unsolvable-problems-to-be-solved (koan), its equally enigmatic dialogues (mondo), its sessions of concentrated meditation (zazen) and its frequently painful 'shock treatments' inflicted by the masters upon the argumentative disciples Zen is neither an 'escapist' nor a 'nihilistic' doctrine Rather, it aims as it were, at transforming life into a work of art The paradoxical koans are attempts to liberate the spirit from petrified norms so as to re value all conventional contradictory ideas such as affirmation and negation right and wrong truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness on a higher spiritual plane This can be achieved only through transcendent wisdom, prajna, which is not merely knowledge and understanding but the highest power of intuition By the realization of Enlightenment 'suddenly' revealed after a long assiduous training the inner essence of all things is grasped leading to a harmonious communion with the transcendent beauty of nature as suggested in many Zen paintings Satori removes the barriers of the mind from the inmost self thus releasing and purifying all the natural energies all the potentially creative and benevolent impulses As a method Zen is based on the practice of intense self-discipline and the cultivation of such virtues as courage, perseverance, clear insight and compassion. Its ultimate aim is perfect spiritual 'transfiguration' bringing about a new dynamic view of life and the universe which—'sub specie aeternitatis'—rather than negating 'illumines' the multiplex and multiform empirical world of subject and object When this is attained the inner truth is said to suffuse completely everyday thought and action in such a way that all possible occurrences, great and small, joyful and calamitous can be met Zen therefore, has a great practical value 'No work, no food' was an established rule for the Zen monk It has certainly left its mark on the painting, litera

FOREWORD

ture, temple-architecture, fencing and archery, tea-ceremonies, and, during certain periods, on the socio-political situation of Japan. Suzuki's 'irrational interpretation of Zen indicating that it is 'above space-time relations and naturally above historical facts' is not accepted by all scholars in the field.¹ Rather, they maintain that it forms an integral part of the history of Chinese as well as Japanese thought and therefore must be understood in its proper historical setting. The pros and cons of these two attitudes cannot be discussed in a short foreword. But the historical approach, in addition to the spiritual, is certainly relevant to the interesting career of Hakuin himself, as will be seen from the selection of his many writings, given here in a lucid English translation.

The two oldest and most important Zen sects are the Rinzai and the Soto each of which has its own hierarchy and line of patriarchs. Although they have similar aims and doctrines, they differ in their methods. As stated in a recent publication² Zen is not mysticism. Soto rejects the use of the baffling koans and accepts logic and science as well as the reading and teaching of the Buddhist scriptures, even if not as the final authority. It emphasizes the relation between wisdom and compassion. Helping others seems to count more in Soto than in Rinzai. Whereas there was a close association of Rinzai with the 'reigning families', Dogen, who brought Soto from China to Japan in 1228, preferred ordinary people. For the later period, these hard and fast distinctions are not borne out by the life and works of Hakuin (1685-1768) who averted the decline of the Rinzai movement and became the founder of modern Zen. He was a man of extraordinary gifts, mystic and practical, strong and gentle, imbued with true compassion and with an open eye for the miseries of the human situation on all levels. Moreover, he was a great painter, unique among the artists of his time,³ as well as a prolific writer, with an acute power of (realistic) observation, yet 'attuned to the silent music that accompanies every manifestation of life'.⁴ Even though he is regarded by the Japanese themselves as the great outstanding figure of the later Zen period, only incidental passages from his works have been given in English translation by Suzuki and other scholars. Hakuin tried to express the difficult Zen sayings in a vigorous colloquial language accessible to all. Apart from their spiritual value, his works are full of human interest shedding light on the contemporary political, social and customary situation of Japan. Dr Shaw's lively and well written translations, therefore, will certainly appeal to all those interested in Zen, not only as a spiritual discipline, but also as an inspiring cultural force.

D. FRIEDMAN

FOOTNOTES

- 1 The Essentials of Zen Buddhism. An Anthology of the Writings of D. T. Suzuki, edited, with an Introduction, by Bernard Phillips, London, 1963, p. XIII.
- 2 D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, First Series, Buddhist Society Edition, London, p. 7.
- 3 id. *Living by Zen*, Tokyo, 1949, p. 20.
- 4 See e.g. Hu Shih, *Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism in China, its History and Method*, Philosophy East and West, vol. 3, Honolulu, 1953, pp. 3-24, and D.T.S., A Reply to Hu Shih, id. pp. 25-46.
- 5 Reiho Masunaga, *The Soto Approach to Zen*, Tokyo, 1958.
- 6 See the admirable publication on Zen painting, written in German, by Kurt Bräsch, *Hakuin und die Zen Malerei*, Tokyo, 1957.
- 7 Orvald Siren, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting*, quoted in 6, p. 11. See also Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, London, 1963, which contains a long chapter on Hakuin.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

IT is a great many years since my attention was drawn to the Works of Hakuin Zenji. For many years I was a missionary living in the near neighbourhood of Hakuin's Temple, Shoinji. It was also my privilege to have the acquaintance of the late, revered, Dr Takakusu. One summer Dr Takakusu was lecturing at the Retreat House for Young Buddhists, which he had established near by, on the slopes of Mt. Fuji. One day when I visited him there, in response to a question, he suggested that I might like to 'introduce the Works of Hakuin Zenji to the West'. So it is to him that this book may be said to owe its origin.

Several Japanese Christian friends gave me their help. One of them chose the editions of Hakuin's works which have been used. It is a Japanese Christian lady, in collaboration with the Abbot of a Zen Temple in Tokyo, who took much trouble in obtaining for me three of the illustrations.

Dr Daisetz Suzuki gave me encouragement and advice, and the interpretation of the Frontispiece is due to him.

These illustrations must serve to show that there is a whole aspect of Hakuin's character which I have not been able to deal with in this book. Hakuin was an artist as well as a poet and a religious leader.

And now Dr David Friedman has kindly written a Foreword. The author alone is responsible for any remaining faults. I want here to thank Dr Friedman for his kindness.

Lastly I would like to express my thanks to my wife for her help in the preparation of the text.

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HAKUIN ZENJI THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY REFORMER

HAKUIN ZENJI is one of the lesser known Buddhist Saints of Japan. The Zen School of thought came to Japan from China, where it is called Ch'an. This word is the Chinese transliteration of the ancient Indian word dhyana, and dhyana may be roughly translated as Meditation.

A long line of Patriarchs brought this form of teaching from India. The twenty eighth of these Indian patriarchs became the first Chinese patriarch of China. This first Chinese Patriarch, whose name was Bodhidharma is known in China as Tamo and in Japan as Daruma. He may be considered as the Founder of Ch'an. Tamo was succeeded by five Chinese Patriarchs until in the seventh century (A D) after the departure of Hui neng (the sixth Chinese Patriarch) a division occurred, into Northern and Southern Ch'an. The founder of the Northern Branch was a man named Shen hsiu, (Jin shu in Japanese), who died in 706 A D. His form of Ch'an was taken to Japan by Dogen Kigen (1200-1253 A D). This is known as the Soto Sect and it is the 'daughter' of the Green Plain (i.e. Northern Branch of Ch'an in China).

Hakuin, however, belonged to the other School of Ch'an, which became known in Japan as the Rinzai Sect. After the division of Ch'an into North and South Schools the fourth patriarch of the Southern Branch (known as the South Mountain) a man called Giku (died 834 A D), is said to have gone to Japan at the invitation of the Empress Danrin, where he founded a famous convent. If so this is the first time that Ch'an ideas were brought to Japan. But Giku left no organized school or organization, and the Southern School of Ch'an does not claim to have been introduced into Japan till later. Giku's successor was a man named Obaku Kiun (Huang po Hsi yun in Chinese). This patriarch was the author of a famous scripture, called 'The Essentials of the Transmission of Mind' (Denshin Hoyo in Japanese). It was his successor, a man called Hui Jang (Ejo in Japanese, died 867 A D) who is known as the founder of

the Rinzai Sect (Lin-chi tsung in Chinese) In the twelfth century a Japanese scholar went over to China and there became imbued with Rinzai's form of Ch'an doctrines He finally returned to Japan in 1191, where he became the founder of the famous Rinzai Sect of Ch'an or Zen as it must now be called

It was to this school of Zen thought that Hakuin Zenji belonged Zen had its ups and downs during the long course of Japanese history till the eighteenth century. Perhaps it was at its lowest ebb, both morally and intellectually at that time Outwardly there was much prosperity and crowds of unworthy men flocked into the Temples, but there was but little spiritual life or force

It was at this time that Hakuin appeared on the scene In the Volume of Zen, contained in the *Bukkyo Kakushu Koyo* (Synopsis of all the Buddhist Sects, published by the Combined Sects in Japan in 1896 A D) it says

'If Hakuin had not inherited the succession, perhaps our religion would not have continued to our times Hakuin is the great, outstanding figure of the last five hundred years of our Zen Sect He cleared away the accumulated evil customs, and cleansed the "inner caves" of our "Law" There is no other man to whom we can point as the restorer of our pure teaching That is why we are grateful to our Emperor for granting to him the posthumous title of 'Sho-Shu Kokushu' (National Teacher of the Right Religion) After Hakuin, the state of our sect greatly improved Its rules and regulations were reformed and many good teachers have come forth All of us, his successors owe much to him'

Hakuin's teaching, as contained in the eight volumes of his collected works, may be summed up briefly as follows

First, he insists that the fundamental Zen practice of meditation and direct 'heart to heart' knowledge of the Buddha is not an affair of the cloister or meditation alone It is the spirit which should pervade the whole life of men

Secondly, he teaches that neither meditation nor any other religious practice is sufficient without a strict observance of the moral law

Thirdly (perhaps as a result of his own personal experience), he thinks that those who aim at attaining spiritual maturity

should take care to preserve the health of the body.

In his instructions to the feudal classes Hakuin placed these principles before them in the order given above. When teaching the less educated peasants he stressed first the moral law and made that the base on which their religious life should be built. The third point, about health, was addressed more especially to the many earnest men who were giving up their lives to the strict observance of their ascetic religious duties. Hakuin himself was an outstanding example of how health, seriously affected by too strenuous ascetic practices might be restored. He suffered from what he calls the 'Meditation Sickness' for many years, but having cured himself, eventually lived on to the good old age of eighty four.

Hakuin's teaching in its more philosophical aspect is to be found in his great work *Keiso Dokuzui* (Poisonous Stamens and Pistils of the Glade of Thorns) In that book may be found in fuller detail his doctrines about the nature of man, both in its physical and spiritual aspects, and his doctrine of the nature of mind as well as his teaching about the nature of the Buddha heart or mind

On the more practical side, one cannot but notice Hakuin's moral courage. It needed a great deal of that to say what Hakuin said to the nobles and samurai of those times about their need for moral reform. This he expressed very carefully in his courteous way.

His sympathy with the peasants in their sufferings and poverty, which were increasing so terribly at that time, was true and deep. He literally suffered with them, as can be seen by the picture given of his life in that old dilapidated temple of his, and in the way in which he used to go and sit on the little ridges between the rice fields and talk to them as a father talks to his family. No wonder they called him 'Our dear priest'.

Hakuin's tolerant spirit is evident from his letters to members of other sects. He never thinks of belittling their beliefs or shows any sign of being superior in any way, but rather makes it clear that his own knowledge and experience of Zen has taught him that Zen can be found in, and is indeed the basis of, all true creeds and all efforts made in sincerity to discover the truth

A SHORT LIFE OF HAKUIN

HAKUIN was born on December 25th 1685. His father's family name had been Sugiyama, but he had been adopted into his wife's family at the time of his marriage and his name was changed to Nagasawa. His mother was the daughter of the Postmaster of the town of Hara in the province of Suruga.

The Nagasawa family belonged to the Nichiren Sect, and this was of importance in the spiritual development of the son, whose childhood name was Iwajiro.

From his earliest years Iwajiro was noted for his remarkable memory. It is said that at four he could repeat by heart over three hundred village songs, and that once after returning from a service where a sermon was preached on the Devadatta Section of the *Saddharma pundarika* sutra (Hokke-kyo) he astonished everybody by giving them an accurate account of all that he had heard.

Unfortunately a sermon on the eight Hot Hells which he once heard terrified him and it was a long time before he recovered from the spiritual shock. Eventually, however, as a result of his terror he was moved to seek for the Truth. He had difficulty in persuading his parents to permit him to leave his home and begin his serious religious life by entering a temple and accepting the guidance of a priest. The temple was Shoinji, of the Rinzaï Branch of the Zen sect. At last, on March 26 1699, he received primary ordination at the hands of Tan Reiden. His name was now changed to Ekaku.

From that day he began his long religious quest. He went from one temple to another, from one famous priest to another. The search was interrupted for a time by the death of his mother in 1706, but he continued studying the Scriptures (*The Kokoshu*, a Collection of Lectures for Zen Retreats) and the *Shijunisho-kyo* (The Scripture of the Forty Two Chapters). At one period he was much influenced by the famous poet Ba-o who lived in the *Zuinji* in the province of Mino. Hakuin's clear and polished literary style was no doubt due in great measure to the influence of this poet.

About 1708 he went to study at a temple in Takata, in the province of Echigo, under a priest named Shotetsu. Then he moved to Iiyama in the province of Shinano. Here he studied under an old priest named Etan of the Shojū-an. This old priest treated Hakuin in an off-hand and rough manner. Most young men would soon have taken offence and gone off to more congenial surroundings. But Hakuin had been deeply impressed by the old man's character, so he patiently bore the harsh treatment and after many months 'under the hammer and shackles' of his teacher he received the reward of his patience.

This is what he tells us of his great experience at Iiyama :

'One day, in the morning, I wandered round the town of Iiyama on my customary alms begging route. I was walking alone when a wonderful idea about the Way came into my mind, of which I could not rid myself. I became so obsessed with this idea that I did not notice where my feet carried me. Suddenly I found myself, without knowing how I had come there, at the door of someone's house where I was begging alms. For a long time I was standing there, so absorbed in the new idea that the master of the house who had ordered me to go away over and over again finally in exasperation took up a writing brush and hurled it at me.'

Hakuin's face was cut and he was knocked over in a faint. The neighbours rushed out to see what was happening, but even all the bustle and noise did not penetrate into his mind. His whole soul was still filled with the great thought. Two or three passers-by lifted him up and asked him what was the matter. But he suddenly clapped his hands and burst out laughing. Everybody who saw this thought he was only a crazy priest, so they left him and went their way. After he had come to himself he brushed off the mud and dust from his clothes and went back to his temple with a smiling face. As he reached the temple his teacher, Etan, was standing on the temple verandah and saw him coming in. He called out: 'Something has happened to you, what is it?' So Hakuin told him the whole of the morning's experience and what his great thought had been. Then his old teacher said: 'Now you must take the vows and not be satisfied with having attained to that, from now on your studies

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

will have to be deeper than ever. Your life will be more strenuous since this enlightenment has come to you.'

Etan Shōju's long continued discipline had at last produced its effect. Hakuin had grasped the inexpressible reality of the nature of mind. He had reached enlightenment, knowledge of the real nature of truth.

Soon after this experience Hakuin was called back to nurse his first teacher at Dai shō-ji in Numazu, near to his old home in Hara. It was here that he studied the *Pi-yen lu* (*Hekigan Roku* or *Blue Cliff Records*), also the *Diamond Sutra* and many other great scriptures at temples in that neighbourhood.

Now, however, his own health began to deteriorate. His account of his illness and his remarkable recovery is given in his *Yasen Kanna*.

After his recovery he continued his studies and went on travelling widely seeking further wisdom from many well known teachers in all parts of the country. Sometimes he was tempted to stay with some enlightened priest, no matter how cold and uncomfortable the place. He expressed his feelings in two short poems:

Oh! let me hear again the echo of that snow, falling in the twilight

At that ancient Temple in the grove of Shinoda!

and one which is a sort of motto for his life:

Having heard the Way in the evening
Let me die in the morning.

After still further pilgrimages he had decided to retire to a distant hermitage in the province of Mino (to a place called Iwataki). He was dissuaded from this by an urgent message from his father who was then dying. So he returned to his own home and, after his father's death took up residence at the temple of Shōinji, which was almost derelict and very desolate. It was here that he had begun his religious life, and here he lived in great poverty till the end of his life, only going away when requested to lecture and teach at various temples, mostly in the near neighbourhood.

But his piety and learning soon became known throughout

A SHORT LIFE OF HAKUIN

the land and many great persons and hundreds of young students came to him for guidance and instruction. How spiritually contented he was now, in spite of his many material discomforts is shown by his little poem, composed at this time:

'Feelings of pity and harshness
All are reduced by distance
Happy indeed, I will not seek
The hills of any distant country.'

Here in his first and last temple he died at the age of eighty-four, on January 18, 1769. The posthumous title of Shin-Ki-Doku-Myo was given soon afterwards.

HAKUIN ZENJI AND HIS PEASANT PARISHIONERS

ONE of the delightful traits of Hakuin Zenji's character is his affection for his poorer parishioners. His knowledge of their circumstances and their minds came partly from this affection for them, but partly also from the fact that he had had personal experience of deep poverty.

The faulty policies of the Tokugawa shogunal authorities were now producing their dire effects. These effects were being felt in the life of the nation as a whole as well as in the religious life of the temples. Perhaps the chief of these policies was the attempt to perpetuate the class or caste system of feudalism, keeping their own family and their own immediate feudatory families not only as a top-most class, but as a prosperous and wealthy class.

The enforced residence of the provincial nobles and their families in Yedo for months at a time, had not only increased the size of that city, but had led to an increase in luxurious living and much dissipation. Though two or three of the Shoguns fought against this (men like Tsunayoshi and Yoshimune) and made efforts to counteract the rising tide of evil, for instance by the Kwampo Reforms of 1742 A.D., other Shoguns (like Ieshige and Ieharu) out-did their own vassals in their own profligacy and love of display.

Hakuin's wrath, contempt and spiritual threats against this outrageous life of the upper classes is reflected in his popular sermons. It is depicted in his description of the sinners in hell, amongst whom are found even purple and red robed abbots and many members of very high rank.

Perhaps one of the worst results of the extravagance and luxury of the higher classes was the deepened poverty of the lower masses of the people, amongst whom the chief sufferers were the peasants.

Hakuin's altruism was no doubt the chief incentive for his sympathetic attitude. But this was reinforced by his own personal experience. The desolation into which Shoinji the

temple at which he became resident priest, had fallen, almost passes description. The property had fallen into the hands of usurers before Hakuin returned to it at the request of his dying father. The roof was broken, the upright posts holding up the building were terribly rotten. Wind and rain could not be kept out. Only one faithful old servant remained to collect firewood, grow a few vegetables and do the needful morning and evening chores. Very little rice was collected by the daily alms collecting bowl, so that it was barely possible to sustain life.

Hakuin, however, found in this temple just as it was, the conditions of peace and the occasion for quietness and brightness. Here he practised what he called 'Introspective Meditation' seeking the truth within his own soul, and as he says,

'From the day I went there for quiet and restful purity I became healthier every day. I had no sense of poverty or wealth. It was as if I were dwelling in an open country of ten thousand leagues.'

But this poverty which his bright soul thus passed by, was also an experience which he shared with his poor parishioners. And he gave them the comfort and help of his own wisdom, as is seen in his wayside sermons and the talks he had with them as he sat by the side of the fields where they were working. They called him 'Our dear priest'.

These wayside and field-side talks show that Hakuin could take a good deal of knowledge for granted in his hearers. Besides the traditions which were handed down in the homes, much of the contents of several of the famous Scriptures seems to have been understood. Many of his hearers could read, as is shown by his use of the ideograms for illustrating his exhortations.

His religious tolerance and skilful use of accommodated truth enabled him to bring the truth home to his listeners' hearts without offending their religious susceptibilities.

The main object of his instruction was to open his hearers' eyes to the importance of the mind and the fundamental Buddha nature which is to be found in man. He held the prevailing views of the complex nature of the body, with its 'four constituents' and two fundamental principles of activity—positive and negative, with the various internal organs as embodying various mental activities.

This physical foundation being so complicated it was not surprising that the mind should be even more so. To explain the nature of man to his hearers he uses three ideograms, and puts his teaching into the form of an allegory drawn from the social life of the time, which would be easily intelligible to them.

The controlling element is explained by the ideogram 'Shin' (Kami God). This Shin is likened to the feudal lord who gives unity to all the mental and spiritual activities.

Below this Shin come the retainers and close attendants of the lord. The ideogram for these is the one generally used for 'sprites', gnomes etc., and for such indefinable qualities as the 'spirit of a flower' or an echo. These retainers stand for the inward qualities of the mind and point to the mental vigours, energy and strength of the soul.

In the third place comes the ideogram generally used for such things as air or atmosphere (Ki). This stands for the common people, the peasants who till their lord's fields etc. They represent the dispositions, moods and frame of mind.

Shin, then, signifies the unifying aspect of man's mental life. Ki points to its all pervasive activity.

This complicated mind is conceived as operating on two levels. There is a controlling level, the 'Mind King', which grasps the phenomenal world in general or perceives objectivity as a whole. It controls the more individual perceptions of objects and may be said to be the realization of the Non Self.

The lower level of the mind, the Mind Place, perceives objects separately as individual objects—form and colour. It discriminates and gives rise to differing forms of consciousness, such as memory, desire, imagination. The more inward forms are the retainers, the more outward perceptions (of form etc.) are the peasants. These two levels of the mind operate in varied ways. There are, roughly speaking, those which deal with intellectual problems, and there are those which are concerned with moral matters, and so on.

The important problem, however, about all this complicated organism of the mind is as to how it came into being, and what is going to be its end. How is it related to the ultimate welfare of man? Hakuin tells his readers and listeners to practice what he calls Nai Kwan Introspection, if they wish to answer these questions satisfactorily. This will eventually lead to the knowledge that all sense consciousness must be brushed away.

when enlightenment will result. This will be the deliverance from the terrors of the ever revolving wheel

But if all sense consciousness is brushed aside is nothing left? Hakuin says that when the 'accumulated dusts' have been brushed off the mirror true wisdom will come. Wisdom which will not cause return to the wheel. This wonderful wisdom cannot be described. What is it, Hakuin asks, that makes a man into a real artist or musician or craftsman? It is some hidden, mysterious element within which cannot be told in words.

Hakuin spent the first part of his life in pursuit of this secret, and the second part, when he had found that secret, in helping others along the road to its discovery

This teaching, Hakuin believed, was to be found by men and women of all ranks of life and even in those forms of the Buddhist religion which differed from his own, the Amida, Shingon, Nichiren and other sects, provided only that the seekers were sincere and straightforward in their search.

But they must not expect to find the way easy. The difficulties of sincere meditation as well as of sincere worship might be considered as obstacles, but they were obstacles to be overcome, and in the overcoming of them was assurance of enlightenment for prince and peasant alike

Hakuin's affectionate interest in his peasant parishioners is shown by his use of their own patois. This cannot, of course, be rendered into a foreign language. Here, however, is a short sentence from the *Anshin Hokori Tataki*, which shows the kind of language he used in his talks to his humble friends:

Yare, Yare, minasan kute mo kunnai. Oraga Oyaji wo nan no kuni no ohito mo .

Moreover in each separate sermon the language suits the character who is supposed to be speaking. Thus in the *Otafuku Jōro Kobiki Uta* we have

Ten ja, ten ja to minasama osharu. Ten no togame mo iya de soro. Fumi no kazu kazu koi kogaretemo, washi wa tōza no hana wa iya!

A Chat on a Boat in the Evening

YASEN KANNA

PREFACE TO A CHAT ON A BOAT IN THE EVENING
A CHAT ON A BOAT IN THE EVENING
NOTES

The translator wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Father Wilhelm Schiffer S.J. in the translation of parts of the following chapter, an earlier version of which was published in *Monumenta Nipponica*, 1957.

YASEN KANNA

A CHAT ON A BOAT IN THE EVENING

BY HAKUIN ZENJI

PREFACE TO A CHAT ON A BOAT IN THE EVENING

(Words) Selected by the Starved and Frozen One of the
Hermitage of Poverty.

IN the Spring of the seventh year of the Horeki era (1757), at the (Zodiacal) Sign of the Ox in the fourth duodenary of the Calendar, the proprietor of the book store, called Shogetsu Do, in the capital, sent a letter written in the current handwriting to the near disciples of our Kokurin (Hakuin). In this letter he said:

'I have heard with humble respect that there is a manuscript entitled *Yasen Kanna* (A Chat on a Boat in the Evening) among the papers of your Teacher. I am told that in this work he has put together very carefully the secrets of long life, secrets which train the spirit, nourish the soul and supply power for doing work. Indeed this work contains the essence of what is called the divine elixir of life. Therefore wise men who know the good *things of the world, when they think of this book, think of it* as they do of the rainbow shining in the clouds after a long drought. Some wandering monks have transcribed it, but they keep it hoarded away as a great secret and do not let it be seen. It is as if the mighty forces of heaven are kept uselessly stored up in a great chest. My request is that this book may be given a life as long as that of the catalpa tree and that our spiritual thirst may be quenched.

'I hear that your revered teacher, even in his old age, always enjoys being helpful to others. So, if you think there is anything which may be of benefit to us ordinary mortals in this writing, surely, surely, he will not grudge it to us'

This letter which was sent in duplicate, was presented to the teacher. He smiled. So his disciples opened the box containing the old manuscripts. More than half the papers had already been consumed in the bellies of the moths. The disciples, however, immediately emended and copied the writings, and now fifty pages have made their appearance. They are being enclosed in proper covers and sent to the teacher in the capital. I am a day or two older than the other disciples, so I have felt compelled to undertake this preface.

The teacher said

"This teacher (I myself) has been living in this temple for about forty years. Since I took up my alms bowl, three generations of *hempen robed monks* have crossed this threshold. Here they have submitted to my poisonous spittle and endured my painful rod, but they have forgotten to go away. Some have been here for ten, some for twenty years. Some do not seem to dislike the probability that they may become dust under the trees of this Swan-Grove (this temple). They are all of them prominent men, "Fair Flowers" for all regions. They live scattered about to the east and west, within ten or twelve miles. They live under conditions of great suffering in old decaying houses, temples and broken down tombs, which they rent as hermitages. Distressed in the mornings, pained with bitter evenings, starved in the daytime, frozen at night, nothing passes through their mouths but vegetables and barley flour. Their ears hear nothing but scoffs and reviling or scolding words. What touches their bodies is only angry fists and painful rods. What they see causes them to furrow their brows. What they hear brings sweat to their bodies. The very gods must surely shed tears for them. The demons must surely put the palms of their hands together and pray for them.

"When these men first came here, they looked like So-gyoku (Sung yu in Chinese) and Ka an (Ho-yen in Chinese) so attractive were their looks, and their skin shone like fine oil. But before long they were like To-ho (Tu fu in Chinese) and Ka to (Chia tao in Chinese) their bodies dried up, their faces haggard. If one met them on the shores of the lagoon they were like bent up wizened things. If they were not in truth very Bodhisattvas of men, bold and strong of spirit, regarding not the life of their bodies, what pleasure could there possibly have been for them.

in crowding together here for such a long time? It is because these men have too often suffered excessively and been too strict in their disciplinary exercises that their lungs have shrunk, their bodies have become wizened. They suffer pains in their loins and have indigestion and other diseases which are too hard to cure. For very pity and grief, I myself, never too well, and pale, feel that I can no longer restrain myself, but must daily exercise my hoary old head and try to feed them from these aged breasts of mine, by imparting to them the secret of what I call introspection.

'Let me say here, too, that if anyone who has come to practise meditation and discernment of the Way and is an advanced student, has fits of dizziness and feels weary in his body as if the five internal organs of his, are out of harmony with each other, even if he tries to cure his ailments by the use of the three medical arts of acupuncture, moxacautery and drugs, then even if he were Ka da (Hua-t'o in Chinese) or Henso (Pien-ts'ang in Chinese) it would be difficult for him to be healed. But I have the secret of the hermit's elixir of life. My dear friends, I hope you will make trial of it, you will soon see wonderful results. It will be to you like the sun bursting out in its full brightness through the clouds and mists of night.

'If you wish to practise this secret art, desist for a while from activities, refrain from meditating on the model subjects' and first of all learn to sleep. Before you go to sleep or close your eyes, stretch out your legs and press them tight together, and let the energy of your whole body fill your body below your navel, breathing centre and loins, and time after time think of the following sort of things.

'It is this body of mine, all the parts below my navel and loins, which is nothing else than my own primal, essential dignity, what need then is there of such things as nostrils. This body of mine is my true original home, why should I need news of my (earthly) home? This body of mine is in very truth the pure paradise of my soul, what need is there of any further glory? This lowly body of mine is in truth my very own Amida, what law can he teach me?

'Bring such ideas into your mind again and again, and you will find that when the effects of such reflexions have taken a hold on you, that your body will be stronger, for its energy will fill your loins right down to the soles of your feet and the lower

part of your abdomen will become round like an unused ball. Meditating thus time after time for five or seven days or perhaps up to twenty or thirty seven days, the five aggregations and six accumulations of sickness, pain and other symptoms of disease will be cured. If they are not you may cut off this old monk's head and carry it away with you.

'When my disciples heard this they were filled with joy and were very grateful. Each one carried on this secret discipline privately and all saw marvellous results. How soon the effects were felt depended on the exactness of their performance. More than half were entirely cured. Each of them continued to praise the wonderful effects of this method of introspection.

The teacher (I) says, "Do not let this cure of the sickness of your hearts be sufficient. The better the cure so much the more is the need to carry on the discipline. The better you understand, the more you will progress!" When I first began this method of disciplinary study I became severely ill—my pain and distress were worse, ten times worse, than what you have suffered. It became impossible for me to move, and I used to think in my heart, as people in the world probably think, that I would like to get rid of this old skin bag of bones as quickly as possible, rather than go on suffering so much. But, Oh, how great was my joy when I was taught the secret of this method of introspection, for I found that I was entirely cured. My joy was like that which you all of you feel. A great man once said: "This indeed, this is the divine art of long life and immortality. With this, a life which lasted for three hundred years would be called only a medium length life. No one can guess how much longer it may go on."

'My own joy was unlimited. I did not neglect to perform the proper discipline for three years and I noticed that my body was getting better gradually and my vitality stronger. Now, however, I began to think in my inner mind that even though I might be disposed to carry on this discipline and support life for, say, eight hundred years, as did Ho so (P'eng tsu in Chinese) I should be nothing better than a ghost protecting the corpse of a dull ignorance. It would be like a badger sleeping in its old burrow at last there would be nothing but the dust of destruction. Why have I never yet had such companions as Kak ko (Ko-hung) Tek kai (T'ieh Kuai) Cho-kwa (Chang Hua), and Hi-cho (Fei chang) (those immortal beings!)? Would it not be

better, I thought, to perform the four great vows,¹ to learn the rules of Bodhisattvas, always to fulfil the works of the law, to destroy the irreversible, firm dharma kāya, which does not die before the void and is not after the void, and to achieve the strong and indestructible body of the immortals.

'So I secured two or three like-minded colleagues of men—Bodhisattvas—who came to study the mysteries with me. Together with them I practised the method of introspection as well as meditation. Together with them I cultivated the virtues of the ascetic life and together with them I struggled for more than thirty years. Each year another two or three members were added to us, till now there are nearly two hundred who have been added to us. In this fellowship there are monks who have come from all parts of the country, men who have undergone labour, sorrow, weariness, men of pity, whose spirits make them dizzy and almost demented. I pitied these men and handed on to them this teaching about introspection privately, and they were immediately cured. The more they understood the more did they progress.

'Though my own age is said to have passed that of a withered old tree, I do not suffer from even one pint of painful illness, my teeth have not fallen out, my eyes and ears are clearer than ever, so that I am apt to forget the darkness and cloudiness of life's end. Never in any month have I had to omit the fortnightly duties of the law. In response to requests from the provinces I have attended more than fifty or sixty meetings, where four or five hundred men have assembled, and have expressed to them my views in accordance with the wishes of the monks, and I have lectured on the Scriptures and the records sometimes for five or seven "ten day periods". Not once have I been obliged to close any meeting before finishing it in proper course. My body is healthy and my energy is greater now than it was when I was a young fellow of twenty or thirty. I realize that all this is entirely due to the method of introspection.

'My disciples, who were living with me in the Temple, with tears of grateful respectfulness, said: "Oh, Teacher, out of your deep compassion and in mercy to us, please write down the main points of this method of introspection. Write it so as to preserve it and succour us and those colleagues of ours who, like us, may in future suffer from the weariness which comes

from hard meditation" The teacher agreed and immediately this manuscript was written

'And what is the sum of the teaching of this document? Roughly it is the teaching that the maintenance of life is better than the moulding of outer forms alone. The essential of the moulding of outer forms consists mainly in pressing the vital forces down to below the navel. When the mind is concentrated in that way and the spirit is intent, then the elixir of life is made. When the elixir is thus made then the outer form becomes firm, and when the outer form becomes firm the inward spirit becomes perfected. When the inward spirit is thus perfected long life ensues. This is the secret of the nine revolutions of the elixir of the hermits (i.e. the most perfect form of the elixir).

'It is of utmost importance and must be well understood that what I mean is that this elixir is not an external thing. It is entirely a descent of the spirit heart into the space below the navel. If all my disciples resident in this Temple are assiduous in performing this discipline and try to progress without carelessness, not only will the meditation sickness be cured and the weariness of the body is overcome, but the Zen teaching itself will also make great progress, and in future years those persons who are now in doubt will be found clapping their hands and laughing for joy

'But now, look! The moon is high, the shadow of the castle has gone

'On the twenty-fifth day, fourth calendar sign, in the Spring of the year, in the seventh year of the Horeki Era (1757)

'In the temple of distress and poverty, by the hungry and frozen one burning incense and bowing down his head'

2. A MONK MEDITATING

By courtesy of the Abbot
Shoin Temple Shizuoka



YASEN KANNA

A CHAT ON A BOAT IN THE EVENING

ON the very first day that I went into the mountains to study and practise meditation I made up my mind to be strenuous and bold in faith, and to work hard at carrying on the refining discipline of the Way. But after only two or three frosts had passed over me, suddenly one night I received an enlightening experience. The many doubts which I had felt up to this time were brought into harmony with the root principles of the inner spirit and they melted away like ice in water. The karma-roots which produce the life-death cycle sank to the lowest depths and dissolved like foam on the surface of the sea. I pondered frequently on the quick way in which the karma-cycle eliminated man—the twenty or thirty years spoken of by the men of old. Oh! how uncertain they are! Only a few months and they are all forgotten by those who were doing the dancing!

But after that night, when reflecting on my daily life, those two conditions of life, activity and non-activity had become entirely out of harmony. The two inclinations in me towards finiteness and infinity had become indistinct in my mind. I could not make up my mind to do or not to do. So that thought occurred to me that I would like to clothe myself in a lustrous glow and throw off my present life and depart from this world.

Finding myself in such a state of mind, I set my teeth, fixed my eyes clearly and determined to forego sleep and food. But, before I had spent many months in that strenuous way my heart began to make me dizzy, my lungs became dry, my limbs felt as cold as if they were immersed in ice and snow. My ears were filled with the ringing as of the rushing waters of a swift river in a deep canyon. My inward organs felt weak and my whole body trembled with apprehensions and fears. My spirit was distressed and weary, and whether sleeping or waking I used continually to see all sorts of imaginary things, brought to me through my six senses. Both sides of my body were con-

tinually bathed in sweat, and my eyes were perpetually filled with tears. I knew that even if I resorted to famous teachers in every part of the country and searched for great physicians in any part of the world none of the hundred medicines would be of any avail.

It was at this time that someone said to me

'There is a man living on the cliffs of the mountains of Shirakawa in Yamashiro. People call him Haku yu and speak of him as Teacher. His age they say has passed in review three or four full cycles of the years of the Rat (which means that they thought he had lived for about two hundred and forty years!) His abode is about eight or nine miles from the nearest habitation of men. He does not like seeing people and if anyone goes up to his dwelling he always runs away in order to avoid them. Some think he is a wise man others think he is a fool. The villagers speak of him as their own hermit. It is rumoured that he was a teacher of Ishikawa Jozan (1583-1672) of the Takeyama school. He is an expert astronomer and also skilled in medical lore. Not long ago some one visited him and treated him with due courtesy and was fortunate enough to hear from him some of his rare sayings. This visitor to him said after he had come away and pondered over what he had heard that these words would certainly be of real benefit to mankind.'

When I myself heard this I said nothing to anybody, but clad myself in my travelling garments and started off early one morning while the dew was still on the ground. It was the beginning of the first month in the year of the Tiger in the era of Ho-ei (1704-1711, i.e. 1710). I crossed over a valley still in deep shadow and hastened to the village of Shirakawa. There I deposited my bundle at a tea house and made enquiries about the location of Haku yu's abode. A villager pointed with a stick to a place far up the valley. Guiding myself by the sound of the running water I went up this valley for nearly three miles when I reached a place where I had to cross the torrent. Then I had to struggle through thick underbrush until I came upon an old man who pointed out to me a spot far up in the clouds. There I could just see a gold and silver looking dot not much bigger than an inch square. As I went on this little dot was sometimes visible and sometimes lost to view according to the swirling

mists of the mountains. I had been told that the little dot which I was shown was the place where Haku-yu hung the rush curtain at the entrance to his cave dwelling. I girded up my clothes and began the steep climb. After passing along some precipitous places I pushed through some more thick underbrush. Ice and snow bit through my straw sandals. The damp mists weighed down my clothes. Sweat poured out of me and my fat flowed away. At last I reached the little rush curtain.

Here I stopped for a moment and looked at the scenery. The surroundings were of an infinite purity and everything seemed to be sublime, the universe of phenomena was truly uplifting. My spirit trembled and I was filled with awe. For a short time I leaned against a rock and inhaled the sweet air several hundred times. Then I shook out my garments and straightened out my collar and hesitatingly and deferentially peered through the little rush curtain. There I could dimly see Haku-yu sitting upright with his eyes fixed straight in front of him. His luxuriant hair reached down to his knees. His face was ruddy and beautiful as the fruit of the jujube tree. He was wearing a large cloth as an apron and was seated on a soft straw mat.

The cave itself was barely six feet square. There was absolutely no furniture nor anything necessary for living purposes, no food. Only a small desk on which were placed three books. These were the *Mean of Confucius* (*Chung-yung*, *Chu-o* in Japanese), the *Lao-tse* and the *Diamond-Wisdom Sutra* (*Kongo-Hannya*, the *Vajracchedika Prajna-paramita-sutra*).

I made a courteous bow of respect and then told the old hermit carefully what were the symptoms of my illness and asked for his advice and help. He opened his eyes and fixed them on me and then spoke very slowly. He said:

'I am a man living here in these mountains, more dead than alive. I sleep in the company of the deer. I gather chestnuts for my food. How can I have knowledge of anything else? I am really quite ashamed that I should have been the cause of troubling a self-sacrificing monk like you to come and visit me.'

On hearing these words I became all the more urgent and went on with my request, 'knocking at his door'. Then Haku-yu quietly took my hand and began to enquire about my five internal organs (heart, liver, stomach, lungs and kidneys) and

went on to investigate the nine marks (colour, finger nails etc) My finger nails were only half an inch long (half what they should have been) He furrowed his brows as if he were actually in pain and then said

'Alas! Your meditation has been too unmeasured and your asceticism too strict The chance of cure has been lost You are too seriously ill This meditation sickness of yours will indeed be difficult to cure Even if you were to try all the three curative measures acupuncture, moxacautery and medicines, hoping to be cured by them, and even if the most famous doctors were to use all their medical knowledge you would not see any wonderful results You are already defeated because of your excessive meditation practices Unless you now heap up the goodness of the method of introspection you will find that at last you will not even be able to stand'

And by 'standing' he meant literally standing on my feet
So then I said

'Please I would like to hear the essential secrets of this method of introspection While studying it I will practise it as carefully as I can'

Haku yu remained very silent as he slowly changed his posture
Then very quietly he said

'Ah! Sir, you are the sort of person who likes to ask many questions Shall I tell you a little of what I learnt long ago? I learnt the mysterious key to the knowledge of preserving life It is something which but few men know Providing one is not remiss in carrying out this system, wonderful results will certainly be obtained A long life may be expected For, you see, the Great Way is divided into the two fundamental principles, the negative and positive the Yin and the Yang When these two are in harmony men of character are produced For then there is an innate vitality silently moving within the body, the five organs are so arranged that the correct rhythmical movements of the pulse are carried on The breathing which protects the body and the blood which gives it activity mutually rise and fall in regular motion about fifty times each day and night To

each full exhalation there is a rhythmic movement of about three inches, and so too for each full inhalation. There are about thirteen thousand five hundred full breathings in and out during a full day and night. The heart is then doing its work regularly and easily. It is fire which burns upwards. The lungs do not get tired or become heated with their constant effort to keep in tune with an excited heart. None of the elements which make up the material of the body are worked to exhaustion. None of the five activities of life, obtaining nourishment, movement, perceptive-ness, study and realization of the purpose of life—all these are carried on with ease. Nor do the six “dependants”, by which I mean the six sense organs become fixed, and therefore the chief fundamentals of the bodily structure remain unimpaired.

‘But when these fundamental principles are out of harmony then the structure of the body goes wrong, each part and all the elements of it become disordered and any or all of the hundred diseases may be produced. When that happens then none of the hundred medicines will provide any remedy. All the physicians in the world, joining hands in consultation, will not be able to do or even to say anything useful.

‘But let me put it in another way. The maintenance of the life of our bodies may be compared to the defending of a country. Enlightened princes and sages always give their attention to the masses of their people. Unenlightened rulers, on the other hand, only pay attention arbitrarily to the upper classes. Now when this happens the “Nine Lords” assert their own authority and the Hundred Lesser Lords call for special consideration for themselves, so that at last there is nobody to take care of the poverty and distress of the common people. At such times, though the country may look green, amongst the people there will be nothing but starvation and death. Then the virtuous will hide away, the people will be angry and discontented. Local nobles will isolate themselves or rebel. The barbarians, who surround the land, will rival one another in making raids and uprisings, till at last the common people will be reduced to the direst distress, and the rhythmic order of the national life will come to an end.

‘But when attention is devoted to the masses of the people, then the Nine Lords restrain their ambitions, the Hundred Lesser lords observe their agreements sincerely and do not forget the hard labours of the poor and common people. In the fields

there is enough millet and to spare There is also enough and more than enough material for clothing the womenfolk The wise men of the provinces join up with the nation, the local nobles are submissive and afraid to offend The common people are well nourished and so the whole nation is strong No one dares to oppose the laws and no enemies make incursions on the land The land does not hear the sound of the war drums, and the people do not even know the meaning of the word "Halberd"

'And it is just like that with the human body too The man of character always looks after the needs of the body in a reasonable way When these organs are thus reasonably cared for, the Seven evils do not operate in the body, nor do the four heresies invade it from outside The bodily defences are so strong that the heart and mind are healthy The mouth does not have to taste the bitterness of drugs, nor does any part of the body have to experience the pains of acupuncture or moxocautery

'But the man who follows the current of folly, selfishly turns his attention to what he calls "high estates" This causes a disorganization of all the material elements of the body So the Five Officials (i.e. the main internal organs) shrink from fatigue, and the Six Relatives (i.e. the organs of sense) suffer and become inharmonious This is why the official (at Shitsu-en, Chi yuan) said, 'The true man in breathing, breathes through his heels, the common man in breathing breathes through his throat' Kyo-shun (Hsu Tsun) said "When the spirit is in the lower (parts) the breathing is from afar (scarce) when it is in the upper (parts) the breathing becomes short" Jo-yo shu (Dhang yang tsu) said, "In man there is the spirit of the real unity, when that descends below the navel the 'positive' returns If one wants to know the time when that 'positive' returns the sign is the heat (of the body) Roughly speaking for maintaining life the upper parts of the body should be kept pure and cool, and the lower parts warm Then the twelve pulses and the twelve branches (veins?) will be in agreement and in accord with the twelve months and the twelve hours (of the day) This is just the same as when the six lines of the system of divination (Eki, I-ching) complete the circuit and the year is completed When the five negative lines are on top and one positive line is at the bottom (of the divination sign) this represents the winter solstice This is what is meant perhaps, by breathing

through the heels When the three positive lines are on top and the three negative lines at the bottom (of the divination sign), this points to the beginning of spring, when all things are full of the spirit of growth and the hundred herbs receive the abundance of the growth of springtime When the perfect man energetically fills the lower parts this is the sign that when he has received this energy his powers of resistance are complete and his spiritual power is great

'When the five negative lines of divination are underneath (in the divination sign) and one positive line is on top This means deprivation It is the season of the ninth month When the sky receives this, the trees and gardens lose their colours, the hundred herbs wither away This is the sign that the ordinary man in breathing is breathing through his throat, and his looks become emaciated, and his teeth will fall out And that is why in the *En ju Sho* (*Yen shou ju*) it says "When the six positive lines give out, all the lines are negative and men easily die"'

So one ought to know for certain that one should energetically fill the lower part of the body with spiritual energy, and this is essential for nourishing its life

In ancient times Go Kai sho went to see the teacher, Seki dai, and after performing the ablutions he asked about the art of making the elixir The teacher said With me is the mysterious secret of the original and true elixir, and unless it is to the very highest 'vessels' (i.e. persons) it must not be handed on In old times *Kwo se shi* told this to the Emperor *Kwo* (*Huang*, the Yellow Emperor, legendary date about four thousand years ago) After the Emperor had performed the thirty seven ablutions⁵ he accepted it For outside the Great Way there is no true elixir, and outside the true elixir there is no Great Way After all, there is the Law of the Five (methods of) getting rid of the desires (coming from the five senses) When you have got rid of your six 'desires' and your five senses have forgotten their functions then the primary and intricate and true spirit will similarly fill your whole vision This is what that great Great White Hermit (or man of the Way, Tao) said 'I who serve heaven am united with the heaven which I serve' This is the overflowing spirit spoken of by Mencius This is to be stored up below the navel, preserved for years and months, this is to be

imply water. Is not this then a word showing that fire which rises so easily must be kept under control? Again it is said When the heart is weary it will be emptied and warm When the heart is empty, in order to assist it the heart is brought down and mixed with the kidneys This is called restoring it. It is the way of completed perfection

'Sir, your fire heart has been going the wrong way, upwards, hence your chronic sickness Unless you bring it down again, even though you were to exhaust all the secrets of the three worlds, you will not be able to stand And is my plan, which is so like that of the Way (Tao), to be considered very different from that of Sakyamuni It is Zen When suddenly it starts working you will find yourself laughing For surely meditation through non meditation becomes true meditation Too much meditation must be said to be heretical meditation Sir, facing your previous over meditation, you are now seeing these severe sicknesses Now, in order to save yourself from these (sicknesses) it must be by non meditation, do you not think so? Sir, gather together the flames of fire of your heart and place them under your navel and below your feet, then your whole chest will become cool, you will not have a single worrying thought, no single drop of a wave of desire will disturb the waves of consciousness This is the true and pure meditation

'And do not say that you will leave off Zen meditation for a while Buddha said A hundred and one diseases are cured by putting your heart in your feet Moreover there is in the Agamas a rule about how to use cream,⁶ which is a wonderful thing for saving a man from weariness of heart Then in the Maha Shikwan (Chi k'ai's Scripture on Meditation 538 597) of the Tendai teaching the causes of disease are exhaustively examined and detailed disquisitions are given as to rules about curing sicknesses There are twelve kinds of breathings which help in curing all diseases There is the rule about seeing a bean, as it were, below the navel The purpose of doing so is to bring down the fire of the heart and concentrate it below the navel and right down to the soles of the feet This not only cures diseases but helps greatly in Zen meditation In the last analysis there are two kinds of "Stopping" and "Meditation" (Samatha and Vipasyana) the relative and the absolute The absolute one is complete vision of the absolute reality The relative one puts in the first place the fixing of the mind on the protecting fire

made unconquerable, and then one morning one lights the fire in the oven of the elixir, the external and the internal and all in between, the eight fastenings and the six bindings will all together become the one great elixir. Then one will for the first time understand that one's self was born before the heavens and the earth, and that it will not die after the great void, and that it is the true and eternal divine 'hermit'. This is the time when the true elixir oven is successful. How could such a one have pleasure in such magic doings as driving the winds, striding on the mists, pushing down the land, walking on the water and such 'closed up' things? He may stir up the ocean into cream, or turn the soil into gold. But as has been said by the ancient wise men, 'The elixir is below the navel, the fluid is the fluid of the lungs, and one turns down the fluid of the lungs to the space below the navel and so turns the lung fluid into the elixir.'

Here I said: 'I have listened to your words with respect, and I will cease from my Zen meditation for a time and will take the opportunity of trying hard to tranquilize myself. What I am afraid of is what *Ri shi sai* called a tendency to diarrhoea, and if I keep my mind on one place will not my spirit and my blood become stagnant?'

Haku yu said with a smile: 'No, no. That teacher *Ri* said: Fire rises, so make it come down. It is the nature of water to come down, so make it rise. Water rising, fire descending—this is called "mixing". When these things mix together they are perfected, when they do not mix they are still imperfect. Mixing is the sign of life, non mixing is the sign of death. When that teacher *Ri* spoke of the tendency to diarrhoea as a purifying symptom, he was trying to help those who study *Tan kei*. These people used to say that the premier fire ascends easily and the whole body suffers and those suffering parts supply water in order to control that fire. There are two principles in the premier of fire. The "Lord" fire is above and rules in quietness, the "premier" fire has its place underneath and controls movement. The Lord fire controls the heart, the premier assists it. The premier fire is of two sorts, one becomes the kidneys and one the liver. The liver is like thunder, the kidneys are like the dragon. And that is why it has been said that when the dragon is made to descend into the depths of the sea there is no loud thunder, but when the thunder is hidden in a marsh most certainly no dragon will fly out. Whether sea or marsh, both

imply water. Is not this then a word showing that fire which rises so easily must be kept under control? Again it is said: When the heart is weary it will be emptied and warm. When the heart is empty, in order to assist it the heart is brought down and mixed with the kidneys. This is called restoring it. It is the way of completed perfection.

'Sir, your fire heart has been going the wrong way, upwards, hence your chronic sickness. Unless you bring it down again, even though you were to exhaust all the secrets of the three worlds, you will not be able to stand. And is my plan, which is so like that of the Way (Tao), to be considered very different from that of Sakyamuni. It is Zen. When suddenly it starts working you will find yourself laughing. For surely meditation through non-meditation becomes true meditation. Too much meditation must be said to be heretical meditation. Sir, facing your previous over-meditation, you are now seeing these severe sicknesses. Now, in order to save yourself from these (sicknesses) it must be by non-meditation, do you not think so? Sir, gather together the flames of fire of your heart and place them under your navel and below your feet, then your whole chest will become cool, you will not have a single worrying thought, no single drop of a wave of desire will disturb the waves of consciousness. This is the true and pure meditation.

'And do not say that you will leave off Zen meditation for a while. Buddha said: A hundred and one diseases are cured by putting your heart in your feet. Moreover there is in the Agamas a rule about how to use cream,⁶ which is a wonderful thing for saving a man from weariness of heart. Then in the Maha-Shikwan (Chi-k'ai's Scripture on Meditation 538-597) of the Ten-dai teaching the causes of disease are exhaustively examined and detailed disquisitions are given as to rules about curing sicknesses. There are twelve kinds of breathings which help in curing all diseases. There is the rule about seeing a bean, as it were, below the navel. The purpose of doing so is to bring down the fire of the heart and concentrate it below the navel and right down to the soles of the feet. This not only cures diseases but helps greatly in Zen meditation. In the last analysis there are two kinds of "Stopping" and "Meditation" (Samatha and Vipasyana) the relative and the absolute. The absolute one is complete vision of the absolute reality. The relative one puts in the first place the fixing of the mind on the protecting fire

of the heart by concentrating pressure below the navel. Ascetics who have used this method have received much benefit from it.

In ancient times the Patriarch of Ei hei (i.e. Do-gen or Shō-yō Taishū founder of the Sōtō Sect 1200-1253) went to the China of the Sung dynasty and paid a visit of respect to Nyo-jō (Jung-ching) at the Ten-do (T'ien Tung) monastery. One day he went into the "Hall of Mysteries" and asked what might help him in his meditations. Nyo-jō said: Do-gen, at the time of meditation fix your attention on the palm of your left hand. This is the summary of what Gi-shū (Chih kai) taught about stopping and meditation. Gi-shū was the first to teach the secret of this stopping and meditation in connection with introspection. By this method he saved one of his disciples, Chin-shin (Che-shen) from serious illness and snatched him from a thousand deaths. (This is described in detail in the Shō-Shū kwan (Hsiao-chih kuan).) Again, the monk Haku-un (1043-1121, Pō-yun) said: I always make my heart fill my abdomen. I never fail to do this when, for instance, I am instructing my disciples or presiding at meetings or associating with guests or at special meetings or at preaching services or at the seven (Verticals' where Salvation by one's own efforts is taught) or at the eight (Horizontal's where Salvation by the help of Amida is taught). I know, too, that many aged guests of mine have benefited. It is a practice much to be valued.

Here in summary is what appears in the So-mon (Su wen). If one is quiet and empty the true spirit follows on. If the pure spirit is protected within from whence can illnesses come? Am I not pleased to base my word on this? And then it is essential to protect this inside one and to fill the whole body with the fundamental energy as well as to keep the three hundred and sixty joints and all the eighty-four thousand pores of the skin in perfect state so that not one of them falls out. It should be known that this is of extreme importance in nourishing life.

Ho-so (Peng tsu) says: Here is the rule for keeping the spirit peaceful and for directing the vital energy in the correct channels. First close the doors of the meditation chamber. Lie quietly on the floor and warm it. Have your pillow two and a half inches high. Stretch out your body and lie face up. Close your eyes and concentrate your mind on your chest and diaphragm. Place a goose feather on your nose and do not move till you have inhaled three hundred times. Listen to nothing and

look at nothing. When you have reached the state where you neither hear nor see anything, then neither cold nor heat can violate you, no bee or scorpion can poison you. Your life will last for three hundred and sixty years (six of the sexagenary cycles) You will be near to being a true man

'Again Ho (Su) of the College of Literature (in China) said: If you are hungry take food, but leave off before repletion. Then ramble about for long distances and make your stomach empty. Then enter into a quiet room, sit down in the correct posture and be silent. Count your inhalations and exhalations, beginning from one to ten, then on from ten to a hundred and from a hundred continue to one thousand. You will then find that your body will be as still and your spirit as calm as the void itself. When this state has been reached and has lasted for some time your breath will automatically stop. When your breathing in and out has stopped, your breath will come out like a steaming cloud of vapor from all the eighty four thousand pores of your body. Then all illnesses, permanent and chronic, will automatically be eliminated and you will understand clearly that all your troubles and handicaps have been destroyed in a most natural way. It will be as if a blind man had suddenly received his sight, he will no longer have to ask someone to point out the way to him. All that you have to do then is to give up worldly speech and sustain your vital energy. For it is said. He who nurtures the eye sense always keeps his eyes shut, he who nourishes his ear sense is always sated (by noises), he who nourishes the heart is always silent

'Here I interrupted him and said. I want to ask you to tell me the rules about how to make use of that "cream".⁶ Haku-yu replied: If the one who meditates has the four elements out of harmony and feels his body and spirit to be wearied with the labour, he must rouse himself and let the following ideas come into his mind. If for instance, he were to place that deliciously scented, pure and clean cream, as large as a duck's egg on his head, he will feel a marvellous sensation come over his whole body. His head will become moist. That moist feeling will seem to sink deeper and go lower and lower to the shoulders, elbows, breasts, diaphragm, the lungs, the liver and the stomach, till at last it will reach the bottom of the spine and the buttocks. Then the "five gatherings" and the six accumulations within the breast, the pains in the bowels, will flow downwards like water

till there will be left a sensation of energy circulating round the whole body, warming both the legs and reaching right down to the soles of the feet. Anyone practising meditation should try to have this sensation more than once. The overflow of energy which goes on sinking in and accumulates till it brims over warming and moistening the body—just as a good physician collects all kinds of herbs and scented drugs, brews them and pours them into a bath till they brim over, and then applies them and makes them soak into every part of the patient's body below the navel. When this impression has occurred, because it is a spiritual phenomenon, the senses are intensified, the sense of smell becomes aware of rare odours, the sense of touch becomes marvellously keen. The body and spirit are so closely in harmony that there is more vitality than when it is only twenty or thirty years old. Now all the "accumulations and gatherings" in the breast melt away, the bowels and stomach become quiet, and imperceptibly the skin takes on a shining glow. Provided that one does not then become remiss there is not a single malady that cannot be cured. What virtue may not then be attained? What ascetic practice may not then be performed? What Way may not then be accomplished? The rate at which these wonders become efficacious depends solely on the perfection, "the purity or coarseness" of the person who is practising the art. When I was an infant (young) I suffered from many illnesses, ten times more serious than those from which you are suffering, Sir. I reached such a state of disease that no physician would consider my case, and in spite of making exhaustive use of the hundred remedies there was no medical art which could save me. Thereupon I prayed to all the gods, and I asked for help from many heaven-bound ascetics. Oh! how fortunate I was at last, when I received from some one the knowledge of this wonderful "cream treatment". My joy was without limit. Without intermission I practised this discipline until in almost no time half my illnesses had left me. From that time on, both outwardly in my body and inwardly in my spirit, I have known nothing but calm and peace. Gradually, but with assiduous practice, hardly noticing the waxing and waning of the moon or marking the passing of the years, my worldly thoughts became less and less and lighter, and now it is as if I had forgotten the old habits of my human desires. I do not even know how many tens of years have passed over me, but somewhere in the

middle of my life I had occasion to go away into the mountains of Wakayama province, where I escaped from the world for about thirty years. During all that time I had no communication with mankind. When I look back on that time it seems like a short dream. "A dream of millet, yellow but only half ripened"

'Now up here in this uninhabited mountain, I have cast away this withered old vessel of my body. I clothe it with only two or three thin cloths, even in those most severe winter nights when the cold breaks through the thickest woollen garments. Yet I have never suffered any harm from cold in these worn-out old insides of mine. It is now many months since my supply of stored grain gave out and I have received no other grain, yet I have never felt frozen or starved. I am sure that all this is due to the wonderful impressions (made on me by the knowledge of this method of meditation). But what I have told you is a mysterious matter which cannot be rationally discovered throughout a long life. And now, what more is there for me to say?'

With these words he closed his eyes and remained sitting in silence. With tears in my eyes I then expressed my thanks to him and slowly went out of the cave. The rays of the setting sun were just tinting the tops of the trees below. After a short time I heard the sound of footsteps echoing down the valley, and I timidly turned and looked back. With surprise and wonder, I saw that Haku yu had left his cave and was coming to show me the way. He said

'This mountain trail shows but uncertain traces of the footsteps of man. It is difficult to distinguish East from West here. I was afraid that you, who have been a guest of mine, should be distressed on your way home. The old fellow said he would show me the way for some distance, he was wearing straw sandals, such as are generally shod on young horses, and he carried a thin stick. But he stepped over the rough rocks and climbed up the precipitous places like the wind waving over a level plain. Laughing and chatting he went in front of me as my guide. When we had descended the track for about two miles we reached the river which I must ford. Here he said. If you

follow down this river you will certainly reach the village of Shirakawa'

Here I reluctantly parted from him

For some time I stood and followed Haku yu with my eyes as he retraced his steps. The pace of his old feet was strong and swift, like that of a man who was flying to a mountain retreat in order to escape from the world. I envied him and respected him. I felt bitter with myself because I could not follow a man like that to the very end of the world. Then I slowly turned away.

After that I began to practise introspection continuously, and before only three years had passed all those former illnesses of mine, even though I used no medicines nor received treatment by acupuncture or moxacautery were thoroughly swept away as if by some predetermined fate. And not only were my illnesses healed, but also all those things which are difficult to understand or enter into or penetrate and which until then I had not been able to grasp with my hands or feet or get my teeth into—these things I now penetrated intuitively, right to their roots and down to their depths. And I have experienced this joy six or seven times. And besides all this, I forgot how many times I have experienced the 'little visions', those joys which make one dance. For the first time I realized the meaning of those words—the eighteen great enlightenments of wonderful joy and the little joys which are without number. In real truth I have not been deceived.

Previously, even though I put on two or three pairs of socks the soles of my feet were always cold as if frozen in snow or ice. Now though three extremely cold winters have passed over me I have worn no socks at all nor have I gone near a fire and though my years have passed beyond the usual span of man's life there is not even half a pint of sickness in me to which I can point. And I put all this down to the instruction given me in this heavenly art.

So do not say to me Kokurin who has one foot already in the grave has written meaningless and absurd conversations and is trying to deceive other people of good class.

This tradition of which I have written is one which has bones as well as spirit. It has not been prepared for those fine people who want to be perfect in an instant.

Those who are sick and tired and fools like me will certainly

be relieved to some extent if they look, read, and meditate carefully and with detailed study.

What I am afraid of is only that others may clap their hands and laugh and that is why 'The horse munches the dried chaff and disturbs the midday siesta'.

Dated in the Horeki era (1757) the year of the Ox of the Hi-no-to sign, on the twenty-fifth day (The day called Hei,⁸ Shepherd's Purse) (14th March, 1757).

NOTES ON YASEN KANNA

1 INTROSPECTION

The practice of looking for the truth to be revealed in one's own mind as contrasted with the study of the outward universe and objective phenomena. The calming of the mind and contemplation of it.

2 MODEL SUBJECTS

Wato means placing the Koan before the disciple who is to use the particular koan as a subject for meditation.

Ko-an are the subjects or problems used by enquirers in the Zen religion to help them progress in the true direction towards the correct understanding of reality. They are called Ko (public) because they are not set by private individuals but have been decided upon by the long line of patriarchs as suitable subjects for meditation. Also they are worded in the style of public documents.

There are said to be about seventeen hundred of these Ko-an. Here is an example.

I Shin To Hatsu. When Kanadeva was still a non Buddhist he sought a discussion with Nagarjuna (100 A.D.). Nagarjuna told an acolyte to bring him a bowl of water and a needle. Kanadeva looked at these in silence. Then he threw the needle into the bowl. This action was in accordance with Nagarjuna's mind. Kanadeva had penetrated to the truth. (To Sho To Rai—cold and heat came together) etc.

3 THE FOUR GREAT VOWS

Taken by Bodhisattvas that they will accomplish the task which they have undertaken.

Amitabha (Amida) made forty-eight vows. Sakyamuni has five hundred vows attributed to him. Various interpretations are given.

(i) To 'nourish' perpetually the minds which are seeking the Way—This is like the Great Earth.

(ii) To ferry all sentient beings over to Nirvana—This is like a great boat.

(iii) To moisten and soak all sentient beings in the delicious taste of the Law. This is like a great sea.

(iv) To include all sentient beings within the scope of the task and testify to them concerning the Buddha Nature. This is like the great sky.

OR

(i) To ferry across all who have not yet crossed to the 'other shore

- (ii) To explain the law to those who do not yet understand
 - (iii) To give peace to those who have not yet found it
 - (iv) To make those who have not yet reached it, attain to Nirvana
- OR

- (i) To know the 'immeasurable Buddha Body' and teach this truth to all sentient beings (called the MUHEN SEIGWAN HO)
- (ii) To cut away all illusions and ignorance, separate all 'Life-death' relationship from the world and from all the sentient beings in the Six Regions' (called the HONNO MUSO SEIGWAN)
- (iii) To discover all the inexhaustible 'entrances' into the law and teach them to sentient beings (called the HOMON MUJIN SEIGWAN HO)
- (iv) To bear witness to the unexcelled nature of Buddha hood (called the BUTSU MUJO SEIGWAN HO)

(Here it may be interesting to point out at least one of the results of Hakuin's resolve to 'perform the Great Vows' *

The Yasen Kanna is the most widely read of Hakuin's books. It is said that most of its readers were sufferers from consumption. This was then believed to be absolutely incurable, and sufferers were filled with despair. But in this book Hakuin told how he himself 'emaciated by the disease and in utter despair' had been able to cure himself, and had lived on into his eighties. Many said they had 'been saved just by hearing the title of this book'!

Hakuin not only personally tasted the joy of recovery but took the vow to help similar sufferers in his own age and in the ages after him. And that is why he wrote this book.

It is not only in matters of physical health that Hakuin's strength of character is seen to be based on his religious vows.

Little reference is made in Hakuin's works to his artistic interests. Perhaps one reason for this may be found in the following account of a visit he once paid to a rich man in the town of Matsuyama.

The host had invited several monks to a dinner, and after the feast had entertained them by showing them various pictures and samples of calligraphy, which the host valued highly for their intrinsic merit. Amongst these pictures was a painting by a priest called Daigu. There was Hakuin thought, a certain lack of force in this picture which made it difficult for him to praise its artistic merit. Yet the owner seemed to esteem this as his greatest treasure. This made Hakuin think within himself that if such a carelessly painted picture could be so highly valued it must be because of the moral integrity of the artist rather than in any artistic skill. It followed thought Hakuin, that the skill or otherwise of the artist was of little im-

* The phrase is of course used metaphorically of Hakuin's determination to spend his life in helping others.

portance or value in itself. So when he returned to his own home he immediately threw all his books about Art, Calligraphy, his brushes inks books and pictures into the fire and began to devote himself entirely to the essentials of religion. Art seems to have become quite secondary. Fortunately not all his paintings and calligraphy were thus destroyed.)

4 THE THIRTY SEVEN ABLUTIONS

SAI KAI means abstinence from food and cleansing the body, i.e. being careful about the control of the mind and body.

The number thirty seven refers to that number of Bodhisattvas, who 'represent' all the one thousand and sixty-one Bodhisattvas dwelling within the Mandala of the Diamond World.

5 CREAM

In the *Nehan kyo* (The Maha Parinirvana Sutra) there is a parable of the FIVE TASTES OR TASTEFUL FOODS. The tastes are sour, bitter, sweet, pungent (hot) and salty.

It was believed that when milk is processed there are five stages through which it 'coagulates' (i) milk, (ii) thin cream (iii) pure cream (iv) refined cream (v) purified cream.

In the Tendai teaching this parable is used to illustrate the progress in the Buddha's teaching in the five periods of his teaching life. So is the second of these degrees on the way to the full (Zen) doctrine. It signifies 'Development of the Buddha Mind or Nature'.

6 THE SEVEN VERTICALS and THE EIGHT HORIZONTALS

The vertical energy of the Buddha which operates directly, as it were from above down to the mind of the sentient beings, who are thus enlightened by 'quick' and direct power. This is the Way of Self Reliance—the way which sees the truth within the mind itself without any external aid from teachers, sutras and needs no accommodated truth.

The horizontal energy of the Buddha which spreads throughout the universe as it were, horizontally, and reaches all sentient beings. They rely on the strength of others e.g. Amida. They are helped by accommodated truth. The numbers 'seven' and 'eight' refer to the number of sects in each kind of teaching.

7 HEI

The ideogram for day used here (HEI) is the day when the mystic leaf of the herb hei falls off. The herb is shepherd's purse. It was believed to produce one leaf each day for the first fifteen days of the

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month, and then to shed one leaf each day for the last fifteen days. This was an old tradition coming down from the times of the first dynasty in China.

The twenty-fifth day refers to the writer's old age—approaching the very end.

ORATE GAMA

The Embossed Tea Kettle

PART I A REPLY TO A NEAR RETAINER OF
LORD NABESHIMA OF SESSHU PROVINCE

PART II A LETTER WRITTEN TO A SICK MONK
LIVING IN A DISTANT PROVINCE

PART III A REPLY TO AN AGED NUN
OF THE HOKKE SECT

I

A REPLY TO A NEAR RETAINER OF LORD NABESHIMA OF SESSHU PROVINCE

YOU must, I am sure, feel a great relief now that your long journey of inspection of the harvest crops is safely concluded, and your Korean feast satisfactorily finished. My old bodily tabernacle is safe, but I do not intend to trouble you about myself.

I am much interested in your ceaseless exertions in carrying on your plans of the 'Two Stages of Activity and Quiet Meditation'. What you say is unusual and of great weight. With regard to the other matters mentioned in your letter, each and every one of them accords well with my own sentiments. They are extremely commendable and I, old monk, rejoice greatly.

As a general rule, if the mental attitude of persons who undertake austerities and spiritual discipline is a wrong attitude, during their times of deliberately planned concentration, they will find themselves hindered in both the states of meditation—the state known as 'activity' and that known as 'quiet' or calm. When the mental attitude is wrong there will be a barrier set up between these two states, a barrier of two extremes. One extreme is that of 'darkness' and the other is that of 'scattering'.² Moreover bodily ailments will occur—such as dizziness, a painful shrinking of the lungs, and physical vitality will be lost so that frequently illnesses difficult to heal will occur. On the other hand, if the training is carried on properly and in accordance with the true method, called 'introspection', the discipline will be found to be thoroughly compatible with the secrets of health preservation. Both the body and the mind will be strong and firm, physical vitality will be great and in every way the carrying out of the 'law' will be easy and pleasant.

Now, in the Agama Sutras minute instructions are given concerning the correct method of regulating one's self for the purpose of attaining to the 'great enlightenment'. Also Chi-sha, founder of the Tendai Sect in China (538-597 A.D.) gave a very

thorough explanation of the main idea of this discipline in his book, the *Maha Shikwan*, or Scripture of 'Sīmādhī'. A fundamental theme of his book is that, whatever teaching one is studying, whatever law one desires to contemplate, and whether one sits upright or not, or carries on the services of sacred processions³ for six hours, whatever one is doing one should concentrate one's attention—say by fixing one's eyes on the navel or loins. This concentration of one's attention must never be relaxed, even when the pressure of worldly business is excessive, or when one is entertaining guests. Do not forget to concentrate the mind by this physical pressure on the body. It not infrequently happens that when a man takes care of his health in the way mentioned here, he will be able to sit in meditation for a whole day without becoming dulled or wearied, and even if he were to recite the sutras day and night he will not become tired, or if he were to write all day long he will feel no distress, and again if he were to give instruction in the law the whole day he will not break down. No matter how many works of merit he were to perform, there would be no onset of sluggishness, but rather his tired heavy mind would become freer and more generous and his mental vitality would become greater and greater. On the most painfully hot day he will not feel the need to use a fan, nor even would he have to perspire. On the coldest snowy night of a severe winter he would not have to wear thick clothes nor would he want to go near a fire in order to warm himself. And again, even if he were to live to be over a hundred years old his teeth would remain firm, so that if he remained careful and was not negligent he would attain to really long life.

When the conditions mentioned above are really carried out there is no 'Way' which cannot be performed. What rule is there that could not be observed? What 'Dhyana' or mystic meditation is there that could not be practised? What virtue is there that could not be brought to perfection?

If, however, on the other hand the ancient practice as mentioned above, is not performed and the secret of the true discipline is not correctly memorized and if one seeks to explain the teaching and to understand things in one's own arbitrary way, then the stage of reasonable contemplation will be overpassed the opportune time for thought is lost, and as a result one's throat and chest become stopped up, one's mind will rise

up in pride, one's legs will be as cold as if they were steeped in ice and snow, one's ears will ring with noises as if they were listening to the echoes in a deep valley, one's lungs will become painfully constricted, the moisture of one's body will dry up, till at last a disease difficult to heal will come upon one, and the very origin of life itself will be endangered. And all this would be because the correct method of the true discipline is not known. It would be a truly pitiable state of affairs.

Now, in the book to which I have referred the Maha Shikwan Sutra of Chisha, we find mention of what are called the 'Relative Samādhi' and the 'Absolute Samādhi'. What I am now writing to you about in this discussion is a sort of summary of this teaching about the 'Relative Samādhi' in its connection with the method or law of introspection.

When I was young I had quite wrong ideas about this matter. I used to think that the Way of the Buddha was nothing other than keeping the mind in absolute calm and quiet. I was always searching out dismal places and sitting there as if I was dead. My chest was choked up as it were, with what were only trivial matters of worldly business. My mind was distracted. And I was not able to enter into any active way of life at all. So, alarming distresses crowded round me. My mind and my body were perpetually in a state of weakness. I was always sweating under my arms, and my eyes were continually filled with tears. My mind, too, was all the time bothered with grievances. I had not the least impression that I had obtained any power by means of the Way, of learning.

And then luck came to me. I was extremely fortunate, for in the middle of my life I received guidance about the true and good way of knowledge. The secret of the method of 'introspection' was told me. I practised this method by myself, in private, for the space of three years. The illness, which had till that time been practically incurable, now began to melt away like frost or snow in the morning sunlight. Poisonously hard problems, set for meditation, difficulties of faith, difficulties preventing me from penetrating through to the truth, difficulties in expounding and explaining the teaching and difficulties which hindered the beginning of periods of meditation—all these things which had formerly been such that I could not get my teeth into them—all of them, without exception were softened and alleviated together with my bodily sickness, and

they melted away like ice And now, this year, when I have passed the average length of man's life, I have ten times as much vitality as I used to have when I was only thirty or forty years of age Now my body and soul are both healthy and strong. And I do not sweat under my arms any more. And though I have sometimes, of my own will, refrained from lying down or reclining for two or three, or even seven days at a time, my mental energy has not deteriorated. Surrounded by three or five hundred earnest monks I have preached on the Sutras and expounded the mystic records for periods of thirty or fifty days at a time and have not felt any exhaustion I, myself, realize that this is due to the good effects of the method of 'Introspection'.

At first my main object in carrying out this method was the simple one of health preservation But in the course of carrying on the method, though I did not consciously search for it, I discovered that my power of understanding was enlightened, and I frequently actually attained to real power—how often I did so, I cannot remember

The most important thing to remember is that the first duty is to carry on the correct discipline by oneself within one's own heart, and one must not pick and choose for one's own selfish desires, either one or other of the two conditions of life—I mean the life of activity or the life of the calm Sometimes one is tempted to think that the life of calm helps us to progress even better than one had hoped, while the life of activity does not seem to help us at all But one who is carrying on the life of calm will sooner or later find that he is unable to enter into the active life at all If a man, who has been leading the life of calm, at sometime or other has to enter the active life, with its worldly business, he may find that he entirely loses all the advantages of the powers which he had attained to in his quiet place of meditation He will find that he has lost every jot of spiritual vitality which he thought he had gained He will, probably, be inferior even to a man of the world who has not given any attention to the spiritual matters of the life of calm He will find that all sorts of rubbishy ideas continue to revolve in his mind, he will have feelings of fear which he had not expected any more, and quite small jobs will frequently seem to be of enormous weight He will then have nothing to show for all his pains in living the life of calm

For reasons such as those mentioned above, *Dai-e Zenshi*

(1089 1163) wrote that the method of the life of activity is a million times better than the method of calm. And another sage, Haku san, said that unless the life of activity is fully lived, one may be like a man carrying a great weight of one hundred pounds and climbing up to the top of Mount Yo gaku.

But you must not think that all that I have said means that you should dislike or cease from trying to carry on the discipline of the life of calm, and deliberately seek to live only the life of activity. The less one understands and knows about these two conditions of life—the active and the calm—the more careful should one be to value them both and remember that they are only two aspects of one uniform condition. This is what is meant when it is said that a monk who is really practising meditation does not know that he is walking when he is walking, or sitting when he is sitting. When one has come to a realization of the nature of the Reality of the Self,⁴ then there is nothing which excels the life of activity as a means of attaining that vital power which can be used in any and every place. Here is a little story to illustrate this point.

A rich man entrusted a hundred pieces of gold to a servant and told him to guard it. That servant, therefore, shut himself up in his room, bolted the doors and sat down guarding the treasure, so that no one could come and rob him. Now such a man's work can by no means be said to be lacking in energy. However, one might compare such a man with the 'śravaka' or disciple of lower rank carrying on his one-sided discipline (of calm alone).

But if a servant is told to carry the gold to some other place, which would entail his passing through places where robbers might surround him like wasps and thieves might troop round him like ants, then that man would have to be bold and brave, gird on a sword, step high and carry his treasure on a high pole, so that he might get the treasure safely to its destination without confusion or any other 'mix up'. Such a man would show no signs of fear, he would work hard and lustily and everybody would praise his valour and strength. In this case the man might be compared to a Bodhisattva of the 'quick' and 'perfect' Way, who seeks Nirvana, not only for his own sake, but also for the purpose of teaching all sentient beings.

The treasure of hundreds of pieces of gold represents the determination or will to carry out the plan of meditation, firmly,

irreversibly, with concentrated, deep mindfulness. The robbers who surround like wasps and the thieves who troop around like ants represent the five delusions,¹ the ten bonds² binding us to the wheel of existence, the five lusts³ and the eight false views.⁴ The man in the second part of the story represents the perfected Bodhisattva, who performs the correct meditative discipline perfectly, in the 'quick' way, and who has thoroughly investigated the truth. The 'place' to which he takes the treasure represents the 'treasure place' of the great calm of the other shore, where are provided the 'four virtues' of perpetual happiness and purity. This is why it is said that the monk who comes to meditate truly and correctly, must sit facing the innermost sanctuary of truth.

And with regard to the 'śravakas', or disciples of lower grade, sometimes they are too lightly thought of, but people of our present times cannot match them either in their seeking of the Way nor in the brightness of their knowledge and virtue. For people today carry on their discipline from wrong motives. They are fond only of places where the talk is nothing but tittle tattle. They do not know what is the correct behaviour for Bodhisattvas, nor do they have the proper 'cause and effect' relation with the Buddha's land—and so the Tathagata has criticized and even scolded them by comparing them to the leprous, itching body of a field fox, and the Buddha has likened them to things of the nature of scorched reeds and rotten seed.

The third of our patriarchs, Seng tsun (So san in Japanese, died 606), said, 'If your desire is to attain to knowledge of the endlessness of the chain of causation, which is the teaching of the "One Vehicle", you do not have to hate the "six dusts" which darken the mind.' Of course, by these words he did not mean that we may be fond of these 'six dusts'. What the patriarch's saying means is that just as a water bird does not get its wings wet when it goes into the water, so we must simply go on with our correct method of meditative discipline, being careful neither to reject nor to make choice of these 'Six Dusts'. If you absolutely avoid the 'Six Dusts' and are fearful of the 'Eight Winds', which disturb the mind, such as profit, loss, praise, blame, fame, ill fame, pain, joy, then one will be broken, one will be ground to pieces in the mortar of the lower grades of discipleship, and one will never attain to the perfect, Buddhahood.

Another ancient sage, Yo ka Taishi (a disciple of Hui neng, 665-713 A.D.), in the same connection said, 'The performance of true meditation must be still within the sphere where desires exist. It works from within that sphere in order to interpret the meaning of the facts of existence. From within the fires the Lotus blossoms, but even to the very end it never gets soiled with mud'. Now this saying, again, does not, of course, mean that one may be addicted to the 'five lusts'. What it really means is that, even if one is surrounded by the 'five lusts' and the 'six dusts', just as the Lotus is not soiled by the mud so all these lusts and dusts must be treated in entire purity of mind and simplicity of life. Because even if a man goes to live in the forests and mountains far away in the country, and eats only one egg a day or fasts entirely and performs the discipline of meditation for six hours each day, yet he can never be absolutely free (from the dusts and lusts) in his performance of the Way. Much less then, when a man is living in the close fellowship of life, with a wife, or with brothers and sisters and with all the confused 'dust raising' affairs of village life. In all these cases unless one has the eyes to discriminate the true nature of things, one will not be able to meet the demands of the true discipline even to an infinitesimal degree.

And this is why Bodhidharma said, 'If you desire to seek Buddha, you must be able to discriminate concerning the true nature of things'.

But now, if suddenly one's understanding is opened to realize that all aspects of reality are but one, and that there is in truth only one Buddha Way, then even the 'six dusts' will be seen to be comprised within the discipline and the 'five lusts' are also comprised within that same discipline of meditation—for all one's acts, all one's words, all one's activities and all one's quiet times are so comprised within the true method and practice of meditation. If such is indeed the case then that form of the meditative life which is carried on in the forests and mountains is as far from being the only way to true attainment as the heaven is from the earth. Bodhidharma was not either blaming or praising the ascetic, who is rather uncommon in the world, when he compared a seeker's life to the Lotus living in the midst of the fire.

The sage Yo-ga attained to the inner mystery of the Tendai teaching that the three realities, the absolute, the phenomenal and the assumed are in fact but one. He had practised the dis

cipline of samadhi with meticulous care, and in the record of his own life he tells us, that according to the way one looks at the matter, there is good and there is bad in whichever of the 'Four Postures' one takes up for meditation. At the foundation of all there can be real contemplative samadhi. What he says is of course only 'half a word and one ideogram'—(teaching suited to beginners) but in any case it is extremely difficult to carry out his teaching—viz. that one can meditate in whatever of the four postures one is in—walking, sitting, standing or reclining. When he tells us that samadhi is actually concealed within or preserved under these four postures, i.e. that it can be carried on in whatever posture one is in, he is trying to tell us that the whole system of sense knowledge is contained in those four postures. They are in themselves a form of samadhi, and samadhi is in truth one with them. His 'Bodhisattva' is one who, without rising from his seat or without leaving his monastery, yet manifests the enlightenment through any of the four postures. The four postures are also attitudes of mind, mental behaviour. And Yo-ga was himself a fine model of that very teaching which he bequeathed to us.

The same teaching is to be learnt from the blossom of the Lotus. That flower blooms in the water, and if it is brought too near to fire it immediately withers. So fire is the worst enemy of the Lotus. Nevertheless that Lotus which does come to blossom within the fire has a greater and more delicious scent and is the more beautiful the nearer it is to the fire. So, too, the man who (like the ordinary lotus which finds fire to be its greatest enemy) avoids and dislikes the 'five lusts' and comes to meditation obsessed with the danger of those lusts, even though he may be well informed about the 'two voids' that neither self nor life have any reality, and no matter how clear may be his knowledge of discernment, if such a person leaves the calm of meditation and comes out into the fire or the life of activity, he will be like a shell fish or a leach which has no water, or a baboon or monkey separated from its forest trees, he will not have the vitality, not even half the vitality he should have. He will, in fact, be like the lotus blossom which instantly withers when it is brought near to the fire.

But, if, on the other hand, while remaining normally amongst the 'six dusts' of the active life, a man clothes himself with a sort of spiritual sheen, is simple, unalloyed, complete and of one

piece, that man will not err to any great degree. He may be compared to the man in the story who delivered that treasure of gold while passing through the great riots and disturbances of the world's life. He is one who boldly and successfully displays his courageous disposition and advances without delay or hesitation. And by the very fact of so doing such a man raises up the very source and origin of his own soul and mind, and brings to a final end all those roots of existence which tie us to the cycle of life and death. For such a man there is nothing but great joy, enough to dissolve the sky and shatter the iron mountains. He is to be compared with the lotus which blossoms and becomes ever more beautiful and more deliciously scented as it gets nearer to the fire.

And if you ask, 'How can this be?' it is because the fire is itself the lotus and the lotus is itself the fire.

What I wish to do here is to repeat, and it cannot be repeated too often, that this discipline of introspection must not be arbitrarily or excessively indulged in. It is truly essential that proper care be taken in the matter.

The true discipline of introspection teaches us to realize that the 'Unexpressible, absolute truth' of which Jo shu (Ju-shin A.D. 778-897) wrote, is to be identified with the very elements which we see in our own selves, in our own bodies.

The true practice of introspection is—to this mind of mine below the navel, the breathing centre of the abdomen and the loins and feet in totality (in combination) the 'non ideogram' of Jo shu (Ju-shin) (i.e. the inexpressible reality)—and what logical reasoning is there in that? This mind of mine below the navel, the breathing centre of the abdomen and the loins and feet is in totality my own personal dignity, and where is the place for any nostrils in my personal dignity? This mind of mine below the navel, the breathing centre of the abdomen and the loins and feet is in totality my one and only pure land—and what grandeur is there in this pure land? This mind of mine, below the navel, the breathing centre of the abdomen and the loins and feet is in totality the Amida of my body and this Amida—what law does he expound? This mind of mine below the navel, the breathing centre of the abdomen and the loins and feet is in totality the home of my origin—what need of news of my home is there?

Coughing and spitting, moving one's elbow (i.e. using the

writing brush) when awake or when asleep—can any resolve by such a man be left unattained?—or left unaccomplished? If he, without delay, stirs up his determination, his courageous will, what his ordinary (everyday) will and consciousness could not do, with unexpected un-earned freshness of bosom (heart) with unexpected clearness—as one who can walk over ten thousand miles of ice edges—and consequently as one who can advance into (the midst of) a rebel camp or step out on to the stage of a theatre or song hall he will be as if he were in a place where no man is—he will be like that King, K_i u (Ch_i u), mentioned by Un mon—his great mental activity will issue forth, proclaim itself

Then all the Buddhas and all sentient beings will be but illusion, life, death Nirvana will be but an imagined dream *Heaven and hell will be seen through, the Buddha world the demon's palaces will vanish and melt away* At his own will he will expound the tiniest mysteries of the million immeasurable 'law-gates' (doctrines) He will bring blessings to all existences

He will never be exhausted even though passing through the innumerable hindrances He will never be poor in his long and careful 'spiritual alms-rounds' (i.e. in his efforts to bring enlightenment to others) He will clear up the ten thousand deeds of illusionary vision (literally the deeds which cause effects and appear to men of misted eyesight like flowers in the sky) He will establish passages (entrances) through the valley of sounds (i.e. this world of form and sound)

Also he will wear on his arm that mystic amulet which takes away life With his mouth he will 'bite' and denounce the defences of the evil living monks (literally bite and smack his lips on the birds' claws and animals' teeth of the wicked monks) He will afflict the monks of the three darknesses of the ten regions

He will pull out the nails and draw out the wedges (i.e. obtain freedom) and be absolutely free from subjection to anyone

He will strike down the foolish, blind, wicked fellows whose teeth are like that sword tree (on which devils hang the clothes of criminals as they cross the river on their way to hell) and whose mouths are like bowls of blood Thus will he repay the deep mercy of the Buddha This is what is called the Karma of the Buddha land, the majesty of the Bodhisattva

So much for that Kwai-so (Huai-su in Chinese c. 660 A.D.) of

the Sei hei temple (Sin ping in Chinese) was a great man far surpassing the ten thousand others. He was in a state of calm and quiet, and safety, he had the mysterious consciousness and vision—but the crowd of watchers who had no vision but thought it was sufficient to polish and purify (their souls)—one can hardly believe even in a dream that there could be such men.

This crowd day by day performed the non caused and all day long they are up against the caused (phenomena), all day long they perform (aim at) the infinite but are up against the finite. And why is this? Their way of insight is not clear because to them the dharma nature of reality is uncertain. They are to be pitied because as regards this life (human stage of life) which is so hard to come by, they enter like a blind tortoise going into an empty valley, or guard a coffin like a ghost—they pass through it (life) in darkness, and return uncorrected to their home of the three hells.¹⁰ All of this is because the guidance for discipline of progress was bad and the root of the 'vision' was not true—and as a result the toil of their heart energy was wasted and they were unable to obtain even the slightest merit. They are truly to be pitied.

And the priest Ippen Shonin (of the Jishu sect—A.D. 1229-1289) hung a gong round his neck and went up and down the country chanting the 'Prayers to Buddha and Amida', and he continually bewailed the errors of men as he told them the truth that, 'If once a man enters the threshold of the Hells, there can be no second return.' Doing this good work of warning, he travelled eastwards to the provinces of Oshu and Dewa, westwards to the furthest parts of Tsukushu Hakata, until he visited the founding priest of the temple of Yura,¹¹ where, it is said that he finished his great work as a Bodhisattva, and entered Nirvana. Are not his footsteps to be highly valued?

When one thinks carefully about the beginning and end of this world of ours in which we exist as men, it is evident that the power of wealth is not enough to enable men to be born into heaven, nor are works of wickedness worth mentioning as being sufficient to cause men to drop down into the hells, for ultimately (in the final analysis) it is life in this corrupted world which inspires all these. Those, in this corrupted world, who have attained to such high positions as that of kingship, or ministries of states, or who are the great ones of the earth, or

are just ordinary laymen, such people have in past lives obtained some good merit which has enabled them to attain to the positions which they hold in this world. They have sown the seeds of a good karma triumphing over other evil merits, but their 'wealth' was not sufficient to cause them to be born in heaven. They have only succeeded in being born into homes of wealth and abundance. They now have retainers and concubines surrounding them. They have heaps of property which they control, but they have not attained to true discernment. Therefore they are not benevolently disposed towards the common people. They do not show kindness to children. All that is great about them is their love of luxury. Today they perform evil works which have evil karma effects, and tomorrow they cause pain or even commit murders. They have come into this world bearing a certain amount of virtue, but they vainly set up for themselves a glory which is nothing but a mirage in the sky. Burdened by an endless repetition of evil works they will return to the eternal city of evil—there seems to be no end to this sort of evil in this world. And that is why I repeat again to you that you should not overlook the essential secret of correct introspection, but practise it constantly.

Now first of all, in this true discipline of introspection, there is the secret art of the nourishing of life itself. Introspection is in real agreement with what the hermits call the 'Elixir of Life'. This art began with the sage, Chin-hsian (Kon-Sen Shi). Later it reached Chi-Sha, founder of the Tendai sect, who gave minute information about it in his *Maha-Shikwan Sutra*. I, myself, heard about it in the middle of my life, from my teacher, Haku-yu. This teacher, Haku-yu, concealed himself in a cave near Shirokawa, in the province of Yamashiro. I was told that he had passed two hundred and forty years in review during his life. The local people used to call him the Hermit Haku-yu. He is said to have been the first teacher of Jo-zan Shi. (Ishikawa Jo-zan, 1583-1672). Here are some of the things he said about this matter:

'The whole art of life nourishment consists in keeping the upper parts of the body cool, and the lower parts warm. It is essential to know that, for the nourishing of life, one should concentrate one's vital powers in the lower parts. Frequently people, hearing that the divine elixir is only a matter of performing the five

good works (alms, meditation, etc.), did not know that the five fundamentals which make up the material body (fire, wood, metal, water and earth) are known by the five sense organs—eye, ear, nose, tongue, touch. If somebody asks what is meant when it is said that the kneading of the elixir is done by ‘assembling’ together all the five roots or senses of the body, it must be answered that there is the law of the five elements which prevent the *increasing of desire*. The eye, for instance, must not look at random, the ear must not listen at random, the tongue must not talk at random, the body must not touch at random, nor must the mind think at random. When these important laws are obeyed, then the spirit of this complex essential nature will be supplied, as it were, before one’s very eyes. This essential nature is what Mencius called the “Expansive Spirit”. From this it follows that by concentrating these in the space under the navel and preserving it, year after year, so that it becomes invincibly strong, then before you realize it, the elixir-oven will raise the elixir, the outer, the inner, and the central, the eight regions and the four quarters of the universe will become one great elixir confection. Then one will realize that one’s self has not come to birth before Heaven and earth, and that one’s self does not die later than the Void, but that one is one self a divine hermit having length of life. With this attainment comes the power to stir up the great ocean into cream, to change the hard soil into harder gold, and so it is said that ‘One grain of the elixir changes iron into gold’.

Haku-o said, ‘It is essential to *nourish life*’ First, this is not just moulding the form. The secret of moulding the form consists in discipline tempering the spirit. When the spirit is disciplined the mind becomes concentrated. When the mind is concentrated the elixir is produced. When the elixir is produced the form becomes fixed, and when the form is fixed the spirit is perfected. It should be known that the elixir is certainly not an outward thing (object).

We know that there are jewel fields and millet fields in the earth. Jewel fields are places where jewels are produced, and millet fields are places where grain plants are grown. So, too, in man there is what we call the ‘space below the abdomen’ and this is the treasure room where the energy is stored and preserved. Here is the fortress town where the divine elixir is purified so that life may be preserved for long years. There is an

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

ancient saying that an arm of the sea can control a hundred valleys because it descends so deep. For the ocean itself already occupies the ten thousand waters underneath, and even though it enfolds the hundred rivers the ocean itself never increases nor diminishes in size. So, too, the lower abdomen has its position underneath the five internal organs of the body. It never tires of storing up the energies. And when the divine elixir has been produced and perfected it enters into the hermit city. This elixir is itself in three places, but the elixir I am speaking of is in the lower one. The elixir place and the lower abdomen are both below the navel—they are one real thing with two names. The elixir place is two inches below the navel, the point in the abdomen (where energy comes from) is an inch and a half lower, and the true energy is always preserved within these. When the mind and the body are even, then though life may be long and see 100 years the hair will not dry up, the teeth will not get loose, the eyesight will be clear, the skin will gradually become lustrous. This is the experience when the energy has been preserved and the divine elixir perfected. There will be no end to the counting of the years.

But, of course, the efficacy of this discipline depends entirely on how purely or how coarsely it is performed. The physicians of ancient times who dealt with the mind used to heal before the disease began. They made men control their minds and attend to their spirit. The ordinary run of modern physicians do just the opposite. After seeing the disease which has already taken hold, they try to cure it by the three methods of acupuncture, moxocautery and drugs. Many are not saved. For it is a matter of fact that soul, mind and spirit are the real three foundation pillars of the self. So the wise man is careful to attend to his mind and not waste it himself.

To put the matter in another way. The art of preserving life may be compared to the art of protecting a country. What we call the 'spirit' is like the prince, what we call the 'soul' is like a minister of state, and what we call the 'mind' is like to people of the land. Just as loving the people is the means of perfecting the state, so being careful as to how one attends to the soul and mind is the means of perfecting the body. When the people are squandered away, the country perishes. When the 'mind' is exhausted the body dies. That is why a sagely prince puts his own heart (desires) at the bottom. The ordinary sort of prince,

however, attends selfishly to his own heart (desires). And when he selfishly attends only to the top, he relies on the 'Nine Lords' of high estate, plumes himself on having under his authority the 'Hundred Officials' but never gives thought to the poverty and decay of the common people. Then avaricious ministers rob, exacting officials deceive and flay the poor. In the fields there is a look of starvation and men fall down from actual starvation. Then the wise and the good dive into concealment. Between the officials and the people there arises anger and envy, till at last the common people are reduced to the greatest misery, and the pulse of the nation ceases to beat.

But when the attention of the ruler's desires is given sincerely to the lower classes, and the labour and weariness of the people is never forgotten, then they become prosperous and the whole country becomes strong. No officials rebel. No enemies invade the land.

So it is with man's body. The wise and sensible man always keeps his heart energy low down. And for that reason the 'Seven Ills' do not find any place to move about in, nor can the 'four false views' invade him from without. The defences are protected, and so the inner forces—the mind and spirit are preserved in health. And the body does not have to undergo the pains of acupuncture or moxocautery. Such a body is like a powerful nation which does not have to listen to the sound of war drums or tom toms.

Long ago the sage, Gi Haku (Chi peh) replied to a question by the Emperor Huang (legendary Emperor 4000 B.C.) saying, 'If there is inward calm, void, within, then the mind conforms'. If one protects the inward spirit from whence can illnesses come? Today, unfortunately, men do the opposite. From the time of their birth to their death, not for a single moment does their controlling mind protect their inner self. They do not even know what this ruling mind of theirs is! They are as foolish as dogs and horses who daily merely run about following their own feet. How dangerous! Is it not said in the warrior homes that it is because this ruling or controlling mind is not properly fixed that unexpected distresses arise. Surely it is evident that when the controlling mind protects the inner self, distresses will not come at random. If in anyone there is no ruling mind, even if it be but for one minute, such a person does not differ in any respect from a dead man. At any rate it cannot be said that

profligacy and vicious luxury will not beset such a one. Here is a little parable explaining this matter. In an old house, dwelt in only by an aged woman, decayed, emaciated, in extremity of weariness and starvation, even though the owner is absent, no stranger may enter it without reason. But when that house loses its owner, burglars break into and even rest there, beggars hide in it and sleep there, foxes and rabbits might run about inside it, badgers might hide in it. Wandering ghosts might cry out there in the day time and ghosts moan there, a thousand suspicious things, a hundred ghost like forms might be there—altogether it might become the cave dwelling of crowds of evil beings. And so it is with a man's body.

When, in the lower abdomen it is as if all were settled immovably like a rock, with intense persistence, then not one jot of illusory thought, not one atom of desire or lust, not one half point of mantic desires will be found there. Then heaven and earth are at one's command, the universe is the steed one rides upon, one will be a keen performer of the discipline, hard and firm as Mount Ko-ju (Hou-chung), and like the merciful and benevolent, ocean itself. Buddha himself could not insert his hands against such a one. Demons could not spy on such a person. Day after day that man could perform ten thousand good works without becoming weary. He will be called a truly grateful child of the Buddha.

If, however, a man is captivated suddenly by evil conditions drawn away by wanton conditions, without realizing it he may lose that controlling power. This is called Sudden Ignorance.¹² It is a state in which thoughts are created, names¹³ are made up and activities begin. Then evil demons of hindrances¹⁴ rise up like bees round him, bewitching spirits bringing false views to him hustle about him like ants. The decaying house of the four elements of dreams and hallucinations, the home of the five hindrances and imaginary flowers in the sky, is immediately changed and becomes the dwelling of devils.

There are thousands of forms, ten thousands of appearances. Every day tens of thousands of kinds of life and death are here! Outwardly, perhaps it may look like the shape of a high stepping gentleman, but in the inner heart the changes of mind which take place are as many as those of a she-devil! In such a mind there is more pain eternally present than there was in that terrible battle of Yashima. Within that breast there are greater

disturbances than there were in the rebellion of the Nine Nations¹ One thinks of the story of the Conflagration in the Rich Man's House—(in the parable told us in the *Saddharma Pundarika*) Such a mind is known as the 'Sea of Works', in which life and death are perpetually rising and sinking And if there is no raft there, no true raft of meditation on the reality, and no sailing ship of bold and brave ascetic discipline, then that unruly mind will be drawn down into the swift current of the waves of vain knowledge and the whirlings of desire And such a mind will never be able to pass safely through the evil smelling and poisonous fogs of darkness to reach the farther shore of the four virtues¹⁵

Alas! Alas! People of this latter sort, may be furnished with the wisdom and virtues of humanity, and with the marvellous state of the Tathagata with nothing lacking They may be provided with the 'cinta mani jewel'¹⁶ which can fulfil every wish of the possessor, they may have the jewel of each and every Buddha nature They may perpetually shed forth the bright light¹⁷ of the Bodhisattva body They may be dwelling in the land of purity where this world of suffering should be identical with that Buddha world where the eternal truth is revealed, or in that land of Vairocana where the law nature and the absolute is manifested—and yet, in spite of these wondrous states, because their 'Wisdom Eye'¹⁸ has been already blinded, they look at all these marvellous truths in a perverted and wrong way They can only see it all as part of the world of suffering They think of it all as being nothing but sentient existence in darkness They, like ignorant horses and cows have no real discrimination They expend their human bodies, which are so hard for us to come by in the cycle of karma lives, and they waste their human times of life, which are so hard for us to attain to in that karma chain, that they go round and round, wandering in the city of the three hells which were so painful to them in the past, and in the 'Six Regions'¹⁹ which are so miserable for them all They grasp at the unchanging land of Vairocana's eternal calm but fear in their minds that it is itself hell and they weep as if it were the Avici hell²⁰ itself Such is the way of the world An insignificant boasting in small indecisive views It is a boasting in painfully ridiculous learned explanations which comes through the senses (ears and mouths) It shows a disbelief in the Buddha's law and a deafness to the

true law, a one sided efficacy which does not for one moment protect the right thinking of the controlling mind—it is the final end of the experiences of such people. Greatly to be pitied, and ever more pitied, is that *eternal transmigration*. To be feared and ever more feared are the painful fruits of the long night of life and death.

It is said even of the emperors of the Enki and Tenryaku eras (898-930 and 947-967 A.D.), emperors who were revered as 'Three Sages of the World', that these emperors were seen by the Nichizo Shonin (d. 985 A.D.) being blackened and scorched in the fierce fires of the sixth hell. They said to him: 'Because we relied on the fact that we were rulers of Japan, the little kingdom shaped like dispersed millet, and therefore lived in luxury and pride that we have become what you now see us to be.' So too, Toshiyuki, a son who was distinguished for his genius both in China and Japan, and famous for his beautiful handwriting, and who copied out two hundred volumes of the *Saddharma Pundarika Sutra*, because he did not possess the right spirit of meditation in his life, dropped into the painful hells, and came to Tomonori of Ki and begged to be helped and delivered. Or again, it is said that even the Lord Hachiman, that famous warrior who was called the 'Unrivalled General of the imperial court', and who set the Emperor's heart at ease, and when all the incantations of the high ranking priests of the Southern City and the Northern Capital had wearied the Emperor's brain, scratching and wiping them off the face of the earth with the mere sound of his bow strings—this great Lord Hachiman had to kneel in the outer porch of the King of Hell, Emma. And that famous Tada Manju was once, we are told, called by a messenger of the King of Hell, Emma, during an illness, and shown the sights of the City of Darkness. When he returned to life he was so terrified by what he had seen that he immediately entered the 'six sided temple' in Kyoto and began studying the Buddha Way and reciting prayers to Buddha. It is said that his tears and sweat poured through the very straw mats on which he was sitting. So, too, King So-jo of Ts'in (Chuang hsia) (Sixth century B.C.) who annexed the Six Lands, united the Four Seas and was feared as far as the bounds of the Barbarian States, fell into hell where he suffered its terrible pains. Hak ki (Peh-chi) of Ts'in, who received punishment from the Emperor Wu of Sung, whose fame was spread

throughout the whole world as being a terrible villain, after he had sunk into the hell of filth and slime, at the beginning of the reign of the Ming Emperor, Ko Bu, (Hong u) (1638 A D), was afterwards seen at a place called the 'Place of the Three Reed Vision' in Mount Go u (Kiang su Province) for there an enormous white centipede, over a foot in length, was killed by a flash of lightning and people then saw inscribed on its back a large ideogram, Hakkı (Peh chi), the ancient villain's name! This shows how difficult it is for men to escape from their own evil karma chains

But now, do not say, 'There is no time or leisure to go to meditation, there is too much business and it is almost impossible to carry on one's plans for meditation when the duties of this world are so pressing' It should be known that for a robed monk who performs the discipline of meditation in the right spirit there is no such thing as business or worldly affairs Here is a story to show what I mean Supposing a man drops two or three money bills by mistake in a street where there is a great deal of traffic and there is a large crowd of people—will he leave it alone just because there are so many eyes watching him, or will he refrain from looking for it just because there is so much traffic in the place? Surely not! Rather he will push his way through the crowds and he will not be easy in his mind till he at last gets the lost money back into his own hands And what about people who neglect their proper meditation discipline and forsake their plans to carry it on properly, because they say that business is too heavy and worldly affairs need too much of their attention—are they not putting a greater value on two or three pieces of gold than on the sublime and wondrous Way of all the Buddhas—than which there is nothing really more valuable? If a man, with total concentration, studies the Way, even in the midst of his business and amongst the waves of the world till he attains to enlightenment, then he will be more like that man who in the story, dropped the gold but gave his full attention to finding it again—and when he has found it, who would not lift up his eyebrows with joy?

And that is why Myo-cho Taishi (1281 1336) said, 'See how even in horse racing when the colts are racing backwards and forwards—even there meditation can be performed' And Shin ju (the Abbot) said 'Do not read the sutras—meditate Do not sweep the garden—meditate Do not plant tea seeds—meditate

Do not ride a horse—meditate' This is indeed the ancient truth about right meditation My own old teacher, Sho-ju, always used to say, 'Anyone who desires to learn how to meditate uninterruptedly, even if he has to enter a city of murders and swords, or to go into a room of weeping and wailing, or to attend the wrestling ring or the theatre hall or music hall, need not add adjustment of thought to adjustment of thought, nor does he have to make careful calculations about it—all he has to do is to bundle every one of these things into one meditation topic, and then go forward without a break and without withdrawing or retreating For instance, supposing one were seized by the elbow by the chief devil of the Asuras and forced to go round the three thousand great universes for a thousand of their cycles or a hundred of their revolutions—if then that man even so did not lose his correct meditative composure even for one moment but continued steadfastly, such a man would be a true meditator There is an ancient saying, 'During the twelve hours of the day, just keep your head cool and your eyes steady and do not let yourself get mixed up with worldly lusts of man kind' This is a truly valuable saying The same truth is told us in the military laws, where it says, 'Both fight and cultivate This is the best of all the ten thousand plans for the warrior.' The same is true for meditation Activity is the true discipline for fighting, and the introspection is essential for cultivation These two things are like the two wings of a bird, or the two wheels of a cart

I have already written about the secret of introspection in my *Yasen Kanna* (Chat on a Boat in the Evening) I wrote that for the benefit of monks during one of their rainy season retreats I do not know how many were helped in their 'meditation sickness' by what I wrote there But I do know that eight or nine who were very ill, and indeed near to death, were cured Let all who study with a view to the discipline of meditation store up and compare together the method of Introspection and meditation for they will thereby be able to fulfil the main purpose of their normal lives

Now, if students of the Way attain to conviction about the great teachings of the five schools of thought²³ and the seven currents²⁴ of illusion and how to prevent these, but only live for a very short time, what would they be competent to accomplish? Or, again on the other hand, even if, owing to the power

of introspection, a vigorous patriarch were to pass in review a period of eight hundred years, but if he did not possess the 'eye of discernment' he would merely be like a ghost watching corpses. Of what benefit would that be? Or, again, if a man sat in meditation till he was decrepit and was absorbed only in silent clearness, he would then merely be twisting his life away in a mistaken idea and would greatly stray from the Buddha's Way, but his whole life in this world would be destroyed.

And why so? If all princes were to neglect their morning audiences and give up their state duties in order to sit in long meditation if the warriors were to be careless about their archery practice and forget their military arts in order to be able to sit long in meditation if the merchants were to close up their shops and break up their abacuses so as to be able to sit long in meditation if the farmers were to throw away their spades and ploughs and cease from their cultivation so as to be able to sit long in meditation, and if the artisans were to throw away their inked strings for carpenter's work, their adzes and axes so as to be able to sit long in meditation, the whole country would languish, the people would become weary, bandits would be multiplied and the nation would be in danger. Then the common people would become angry and envious and they would certainly say that meditation was an unpropitious and ill omened practice. But it is well known that in ancient times, when the Zen teaching was flourishing, that all the sagely patriarchs, men like Nan gaku (E jo d 744 A D) Ba so (Ma tsu d 788), Hyaku jo, Hui hai (E kai d 814), O baku (d 850), Rin zai (d 867) Ki su, Ma goku, Koge (d c 900), Ban zan, Kyu bo, Ji zo, used to haul stones, move soil, carry water, cut firewood, peel vegetables, and in this way beat the hand drum of carpentry and construction work and thus earnestly seek the attainment of inward strength within the 'way of activity'. And did not one of them, Hyaku jo, say, 'One day without work—one day without food!' Their activity in the way is ceaseless meditation. Unfortunately this good old method of the ancient patriarchs has been banished from the face of the earth in our modern times. It has ceased.

But what I have just said does not, of course, mean that meditation is to be disliked or quiet thought is to be evil spoken of. There is not so much as one half a wise or holy man of understanding, whether in ancient or modern times, who has

not brought the Buddha Way to fruition without meditation. The three essentials—obedience to the Vinaya rules (Sila), meditation and intelligence—are a great summary of the whole of the Buddha's ancient Way. Who can treat this lightly? Why! If men like all those ancient sages of the meditative way were to have doubts about the transcendent and surpassing quality of the true and unexcelled great way of meditation, then indeed thunderbolts would fall and the stars be shaken out of the heavens.

But, if one's eyes are only the eyes of sheep and one's wisdom is only the wisdom of badgers, how can one expect to understand? But, supposing that sitting in silent meditation actually does cause a man immediately to attain to Buddhahood and instantly to shed forth the bright light of the Bodhisattva mind and body, how is it possible to expect all princes, great men, soldiers and people with their thousand duties in their homes to find leisure to sit even for a few minutes in meditation? And so men speak of being ill and weary in their public duties, they give up their home affairs, and for three, five or seven days they close their doors, fasten the bolts, pile up cushions to sit or lie on, they set up sticks of incense and sit meditating, but though they do all that they get tired from their normal work, and so they only sit meditating for an inch and they go to sleep for an ell! And for three pints of meditation they actually collect a million gallons of idle thoughts. For no sooner have they settled their eyes, gritted their teeth, clasped their hands and taken up the correct straight posture for sitting in meditation than ten thousand wicked states (of mind) grow up in their heads and compete for their minds. Then they furrow their foreheads and crinkle their brows and begin to weep and grieve, saying, 'Our official duties hinder us from performing our meditative duties, our private way obstructs our contemplation.' Then they resign from their official work and hand in their seals and go to some uninhabited spot, a calm and quiet place near the edge of a stream or under some big tree and there carry on their meditation in their own self-willed way, hoping thus to escape from the long cycle of transmigration. It all ends in a great mistake.

Really the Way of the retainer is to prepare his lord's food and arrange his clothes, tie his girdle and attach his sword. He does not fetch water from afar, he has eaten food without

cultivating it. He wears his clothes without weaving them. His very body, his hands, his feet, his hair, his teeth—all these are benefits provided by his lord. But when he has grown up and is thirty or forty years old, and the time has come for him to repay his lord's kindness, by making himself pre-eminent as his lord's assistant, so that his lord may become like those lords of China's Golden Age, Gyo and Shun, and the people like the people of that age, then he begins to tell his beads secretly, behind his sleeve, to repeat Buddha prayers in a low inaudible voice and becomes languid and careless about public affairs. He has no sense of gratitude for his lord's benefits, and, as likely as not, he says that he is sick and retires from duty altogether. But if that is his intention, even if he disciplines himself in the meditative way for three or five years in retired spots, and even though he may think that his thoughts are ceasing and his lusts are coming to an end, yet he will find that his inner organs are twisted and painful, that there are still many fears in his heart, so that even if he so much as hears only the droppings of a mouse, his bosom will burst.

Whether he were a general or just a private soldier, what special duty would such a man be fit for? Supposing some great crisis came upon the land—if it were only men like him who could go out to reinforce some exposed gate of the castle when the enemy was rushing up to it like a great tide of the sea, and the flags and banners were waving like clouds all round, cannon balls were falling about in every place like lightning, and there were terrible roarings and re-echoings of noise, the bells were ringing and reverberating as if the very mountains would fall and the spears and lances were shining like icicles out in the battle lines—if men like those we have mentioned saw and heard such things, they would not be able to swallow for fear, their hands would tremble so much that they would not be able even to seize hold of the hand ropes. On horseback they would squat on the saddle, holding on as if they were about to fall off on account of their own trembling. At last they would be taken prisoner by foot soldiers! And why should all this happen? It would be because of the result or effect of their sitting in silence and calm with emaciated looks for three or five years in so-called meditation. Why! even such a great hero as Kumagaya Hira yama if he were to carry on that sort of meditative discipline would surely tremble.

And so, the patriarchs, in their mercy and goodness, pointed to the correct road to right thought and activity and uninterrupted meditation. If princes have the right spirit of meditation when they are giving their morning audiences, and if the retainers have the right spirit of meditation when they are practising their archery or doing their literary and business duties, and if farmers, likewise, have the right spirit of meditation when they are using their ploughs and spades, and artisans when they are using their inked strings and axes, and women when they are doing their sewing and weaving, then they would all of them be carrying out the practice of the 'great meditation' taught us by all the holy ones. And that is what is meant by the scripture which says that, 'property, life, production, labour, none of these are opposed to reality'

If, however, there is not the correct meditation activity, then everything is merely like an old badger sleeping in an empty hole. It is very sad that men today are casting off the Way and becoming nothing better than the dust of the earth. More often than not, nowadays, people are not able to recognize the black, dark valley of the two voids—of the self and of the dharma—but think it to be the sublime end of meditation—and every day they frown and furrow their foreheads and are no better than a silk worm in its cocoon. The patriarchs are separated from them by clouds and smoke! Their dislike of the sutras is like an injured mouse trying to escape from a cat: their abhorrence of the patriarchal records reminds one of a dying hare listening to the growls of a tiger. Especially are they ignorant that the ancient hole into which the two lower grades of beginners are always falling is very like Nirvana! Even the sage, Shubo Taishi (1281-1337) said, 'I myself for three years lived in a fox hole, that many people are often deluded is reasonable,' and he heaved a great sigh! And Prince Ko composed a poem in which he said, 'The captured fish stays in its bowl, the sick bird lives in its cage. They know a little peace, but do not know the great peace.'

But with regard to the upper grades of learners of the true mysteries in their case it is only a matter of how deep or how shallow is their entry into reality, a matter of how pure or how coarse shall be their efforts to reach discrimination. Who shall choose whether a man shall stay in his own home or renounce the world? Who shall argue as to whether he should stay in the

busy city or go away into the mountain forests?

In the old days there were many great men, like Kobi of Sagami, Rikko of Tai-fu, Tohi Riko, Yoko Tainen, Choko Mujin, who could discriminate the real nature of things as easily as they could look at the palm of their own hands. Their meditation came out of their lungs and inward parts. They trod on and churned up the very depths of the Buddha sea. They swallowed the bitter waters of the waves of the river of Zen. They were honourable as mirrors of wisdom, they were magnanimous in the weight of their cognition of the truth. Idle spirits fled from them in fear, field ghosts trembled before them in distress. But all of these men gave their assistance in state affairs, and so helped to bequeath peace to the world—they put the world into the peace of Mount Tai. Who can look into the inmost sanctuary of their minds?

A man like Choko, who we have named above, for instance, rose to be assistant minister of state and reached the highest grade of officialdom. Rich was his genius as Minister. He was trusted by his prince. He was honoured by the other ministers. He was revered by the warriors. The common people clung to him. Heaven rained down plenteousness. His prince gave him many titles of honour. He lived to be nearly a hundred. His radiance flowed out to four seas. The people prided themselves with the autumn fruits of this era of Gyo. Men assumed the liveliness of the days of Shun. They felt gratitude towards their prince. And above all the treasure of the law was quietly preserved. Truly he was a great figure in that age of the world! And it used to be said too, of Cho Mujin, 'He who lives in his home and performs the Way there is Cho Mujin.' 'He who lives in his home and obtains merit spreads the inexhaustible Way (Tao). He who eats his own ration and perfects Zen, his years are as the willow.' Is not this a beautiful word for a thousand years?

And then there are Naikan, Ko Rochoku, Cho Shisei, Cho Tengaku, Kwaku Kobo and many others of whom we have no records or traditions—Oh! there is no limit to their numbers. In their performance of the Way each of these excelled those who meditate under the trees. Always on ten thousand occasions they assisted in public business. They have put their shoulders (attended) into the ceremonial affairs of ten thousand lands. They have stood in the gorgeous throng of officials who wear

the 'silver fish' and the 'golden turtle' insignia of office. They have been present at ceremonial musical entertainments and at archery tournaments and they have been in attendance at imperial abdications and retirements, but they have never for one instant interrupted their performance of the Way, finally they have penetrated through to the mystery of the patriarchs. Was not this due to their spiritual experience of uninterrupted Zen, their activity of right thought? Was this not the deep goodness of the wondrous Way of the Buddha? Was this not the unique and glorious merit of the patriarchs?

Truly there is the difference of heaven and earth between these men the sort of men who think that it is sufficient to sit in emaciated meditation, and who call what is but a deathly calm the 'root' Zen and are dying of starvation on hills and valleys. Are they not men who, as the saying goes, 'not only fail to catch the hare but lose the falcon too?' It is not only that they have been unable to attain to real discernment, but they have even ceased in the other duty of feeling gratitude to their lord. They are to be greatly pitied. It should be known that everything depends on whether the energy (put into) attaining the kind of progress which is made towards the final shallowness or depth and the intentions to progress is true or not. If, in this activity, there is energy sufficient to fight ten thousand men, then why should one choose the forest or the home? If final discernment comes only to the forest men, then would all hope be taken away from those who are parents, or those who are retainers, or those who are children living in the world? But, supposing one is living the 'forest' life, if his religious spirit is not minutely ordered and careful, and if his thoughts are not kept pure, in what way is that different from life in a home? And conversely, if a man is a householder and has a rich aspiration for discernment, and is wise and sincere in his daily work, what difference is there between that and the forest? And that is why it is said, 'If the Way is deep down in the mind, it is not necessary to live on Mount Yoshino.' So, at any rate, the meditation planned for by all officials will not excel the uninterrupted Zen of true thought to their plan of life so that it may be a meditation. This is the ancient truth which has been forgotten for the past two hundred years.

Now, if asked, 'What is this spirit of meditation?' I reply that it is to have a sincerely benevolent and sympathetic heart at all

times, whether one is talking or wagging one's elbow when writing, whether one is moving, or resting, whether one's luck is good or bad, whether one is in honour or in shame, or in gain or in loss, in right or in wrong, bundling all these things up into one verse heading and concentrating your energy with the force of an iron rock under the navel and lower part of the abdomen. Be kindly disposed towards your lord—as chief object of reverence, regard the great officials as your own associates, as a company of the illustrious Bodhisattvas. Regard the ministers of state, whether they are at the time attendant on the lord or whether they are residing at a distance as being members of the company of the disciples, of the two lower orders of Sravakas and Pratyeka Buddhas, as men who have been led to the Buddha by Sariputra and Maha Maudgalyana. And look upon all the ordinary warriors and the common people as if they were your own children being instructed in the Way.

If you have this 'spirit' then, by that very fact, your very clothes, your 'hakama' (divided skirt), your upper robes (Kata ginu) will be to you as the 'seven pieced robes'²¹ or the 'nine-folded stoles'²² of monks. Your two edged swords will be your desk or meditation table, placed always before you. The saddle you ride on will be the cushion on which you sit in meditation. The hills, the streams, the plains will be the floor of your meditation hall. The four corners of the earth and its ten directions, the height and the depth of the universe will be to you the great 'cave' in which you are performing your meditation—they will be, in very truth, the substance of your real self. Then the positive and negative principles of creation will be to you your two daily meals of gruel. Heaven, hell, the pure land and hades will be your internal organs, your spleen, your stomach, your liver and your kidneys. Then the hall of the arts, with its outer and inner courts of three hundred mats (where state business is carried on) will become the morning and evening meetings of instruction and scripture reading. The trillions of Mount Sumerus²³ will be, as it were, bundled together to become your spinal column, and every form of activity in the world of affairs—such as abdication ceremonies, retirements of lords, archery meetings, writing up accounts—all of these will become to you wondrous works of the good purposes of the Bodhisattvas. They will draw forth the believing heart of brave and bold men, they will bring you into harmony with that true

discipline of introspection. Then when you are standing or sitting, moving or resting, from time to time test whether you have lost the right spirit or not lost it—this is the correct road of the true discipline of the wise and holy ones of past and present.

In connection with this matter of uninterrupted meditation in all the activities of life, the sage said, 'The Way must not be departed from for even a short time. What may be departed from is not the Way. In a passage in the book of Ro (Confucius) there are these words, 'When you feel flurried perform this—when you feel hurried perform this.' These words simply mean that the spirit of the Way is never to be lost even for a single moment.

Now, when we speak of the Way we are speaking of the way of moderation which is taught us in the Scripture of the Lotus (the *Saddharma Pundarika* or *Hokkekyo*). It is explained to us by such great men as Shikyo Zoji, Jakken Jisha, Gasoku Kanki and all the other Buddhas. And special reference is made to the Lotus Scripture because of its teaching about the importance of the correct meditation activity (method). And this activity (method) one must understand points to the state of the real self. It is not at all easy to put away entirely the important affairs of life and death if one attends to the proper performance of the discipline of discriminating the final reality, which is enough to blind the right vision, even, of the Buddha. What is of absolute importance, is that the two states—activity and calm, order and contrariness, verticle and horizontal, must have the pure, unmixed, complete and whole truth in the forefront. It must be such, indeed, that so that even if one were surrounded by a thousand or ten thousand people one would be as if one were dwelling alone in a wide open space of thousands of miles, and as the ancients said—'one's ears as if they were deaf, one's eyes as if they were blind'. Thus should it be all the time. This is the time which is called the season of sincere or real correctness and great doubt actually present. If, when that time comes, you do not go back, but deliberately go forward, then there will come to you such a joy as has not been seen in all the forty years of your life, nor will you have heard anything so joyous—it will be as if you had broken through a large pack of ice, or had breached a veritable fortress of precious stones.

Now, if anyone desires to discover whether his discriminative

nature is as it should be, pure and not false, or whether his energy is really pure or coarse for the attainment of spiritual power, then let him look first of all carefully at this little gatha or spiritual poem. It was composed by Fudai-shi (497-569 A.D.). (He was converted when out fishing, used to work with his wife at farm labour as hired workers, meditated at nights, read the Lotus Sutra through twenty one times, eventually was called to the capital of China and became a famous teacher of the Tendai sect) It is good to read his little poem, because it shows how that teacher after penetrating through to reality changed the nature of his teaching. Before he had penetrated to reality he had said, 'Before coming to "verse" come to "understanding".' When he had penetrated, he said, 'Rather than turning first to thought (or Mana) turn to verse'. Now Fudaishi, in his religious poem says, 'Grasping in his empty hand the spade, and riding on his buffalo, the farmer crosses a bridge. It is the bridge which flows away behind him, not the water'. And in another poem he says, 'The lights in the sacred lanterns leap into the outer pillars The Buddha's "Holy of Holies" runs out of the temple gate'. (N.B. The lights of the sacred lantern are symbols of those 'things which contain the Law'. The outer pillars are symbols of mere 'Evanescient supports—pillars of dew'). Again in another poem he says, 'If the ox of the province of Kwai eats rice, the belly of the horse in the province of Eki swells', or again, 'If Duke Cho drinks wine, Duke Li becomes drunk. If you wish to know the truth right away, face the South and see the Northern Constellation'.

Kanganshi's (650 A.D.) poem is 'White waves rise on the green hills, red dust rises at the bottom of the well'.

When anyone has attained to true discernment of reality these verses can be understood as clearly as one sees the palm of one's own hand. If you cannot understand their inner meaning, do not say that you have attained to enlightenment. But even so, even if you are able to penetrate the meaning of verses like these one by one, do not think that that is sufficient . . .

The patriarch Shuso Taishi said, 'In the morning knit your eyebrows together, but in the evening knit your shoulders together'. 'Myself, what am I like?' and Honnu Enjo Koku shi (Honnu means *a priori* and Enjo means absolute) said, 'Here is a saying of the sage Hakuju, "There is even a time for rebels to rebel"'. Now when you have meditated on these topics and

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ward word They have not yet proved or have only proved in word (not in reality) They are shameless and foolish—they are men of the alien way If one were to look inwardly at what we may call the rationale of the minds of such men, we shall find there only the 'Alaya wisdom' The dark cave of ignorance They acknowledge the robber distraction and make it their child All that they do is to hand down distraction after distraction, but they call it the wondrous way of the patriarchal succession When men like these see the real suffering of men, distressed in the learning of the Way and in true meditation, they do not know that they are pointing directly to the perfect and sudden (attainment) and are the foundation states of the second Vehicle

They do not understand the 'this and that' of upward and aspiring Zen They are a species of learner (sravakas) When one comes to investigate point by point, what they call the direct pointing of perfection and sudden attainment, it is that fundamental ignorance which is so criticized in the Surangama Sutra (Ryo gon kyo) Such men are far inferior to the real 'sravakas', yet they belittle the wise and holy men who have found attainment of reality by their own efforts Such false learners are indeed ridiculous Or, again, in general there are some who look at an ideogram, such as that for 'nothing' (Mu) or they look at an 'acorn', and then they falsely imagine things about them which they cannot even feel with their hands or tread on with their feet and they say that that is the Way of super penetration—they think that is the Way of meditation This is a veritable evil custom It is a disease of meditation which is far advanced and hard to cure It is confusion carrying on to still further confusion until it has reached the stage of incurability, a transmission of corpse to corpse—a blind discriminating

But those who are real Bodhisattvas of the true correct learning are quite different These men go to meditation and go, and go again and again even to places to which it is not necessary to go—reason exhausts itself Their words come to an end, and their techniques come to an end They spread out their hands to the limits of the horizon, and when they have reached that last limit, they rise again, as it were from the dead, until at last they attain to the borders of 'Land of Peace' But in any case, whatever way one ventures along this way to the secret,

have not the slightest doubt about them in your own mind, then you may know that you are of identical type with the Buddha who originated this way of discernment. And what place is there for shame to be called a high disciple of the mystery? Why indeed? In practising meditation it is essential for each one to be clear in mind concerning the heart of the Buddha. If one can attain to the knowledge of the Buddha-heart, surely it is impossible not to be enlightened as to the meaning of his words. If one has not attained to illumination as to the import of the Buddha's words, then it should be understood that one has not been enlightened as to the Buddha mind. And so it is written in the scripture of the seven wise women that, 'The Buddha said, "Those of my disciples who are only great arhats cannot explain the meaning of my words. Only those who are of the company of the great Bodhisattvas fulfil the requirements which enable them to do so"'. And when we speak of this 'Meaning' to what are we referring? We are referring to that sublime mystery, which has been handed down from patriarch to patriarch from India to our own country. And it was for the very purpose that we might be sure that we have understood the correct meaning that he has left for us these 'sayings', which are indeed so hard to penetrate. In this connection there is the word of the hermit, Shin Ju, who said, 'You five hundred arhats of the Tendai school, clothe yourselves in the robes of the law and go out amongst the people—inscrutable miracles will surround you, wonders which are not transmitted through the patriarchs are hard—hard!'. The hermit Yokko (Enen, 1693-1764) was the seventh generation grandson and his wisdom and perception was incisive, much to be respected.

In these times of ours, however, consider well how that the divine afflatus has not descended upon us. In our times men, who are foolish and degraded, do not discriminate. Men are like that foolish sort of person who has not the vision enough to distinguish jewels from stones, and such persons frequently say, 'We ourselves are indeed Buddha so why should we go through all these hard sayings and meditation topics? So long as our hearts are pure, then the pure land is pure—and there is no use in perusing all these old records'.

People who say that sort of thing are to be considered as men who have not yet attained, or who have attained only in out

at the true enquirers with resounding repetition

Why! even a little black robed acolyte, running round the temple, would, if he knit his brows and put his mind to it, assuredly come to understand the 'dregs' of the true discrimination which terminate in true attainment, if they once realized the fact of their 'alaya' sense—that dark cave, so dull and so neutral, neither good nor bad, and its dire consequences. And if that is the case with an acolyte, much more might it be so with those who have received their traditions through alien lines. But what are we to say about those who are 'left in the Buddha's hands'? Some of these may have believed at first, but they have become just blind men, neutral, dull and slow, unable to attain to the headship of secular households, and eventually becoming disliked and rejected by the almsgivers and parishioners of their own temples—going on and on without knowing how to proceed correctly—as has come to be the custom of present day pilgrims.

Let us turn aside now and ask how can one attain to true enlightenment in the correct way, when one is surrounded by excessive duties and businesses of life in the world, when one is also endangered by the 'Seven Errors and Eight Upsets' ²⁶ One may take the following illustration. Here is a brave warrior, surrounded by enemies on every side. He carries a single spear and is seated on a horse with another at his side. His fierce, bold spirit is roused by the danger, but he cannot break through by the mere use of his sword or spear. The spirit he is inspired with is that of those who uninterruptedly clothe themselves with that spirit of meditation (of which we have spoken). However, he gets no apparent benefit from his meditative spirit. He can hardly move his hand and foot, and all the four directions become to him as impenetrable emptiness or cave of the void. He feels as if his body and soul might melt away into nothingness. But if he proceeds without fear and advances boldly, then at some time the whole power of attainment may come suddenly upon him.

Speaking more generally, the spirit of meditation is the combating of self-willed thinking—it is a combat against the weight of one's feelings. It is a combat against dark and deep sleepiness. It is a combat against the ideas of right and wrong, of activity and quiet, of disorder and regularity—in fact it is a combat against all the forms of the objective world of the senses—the

bone shaking, life-taking search—so hard to penetrate, too hard to explain—especially while one is still held by the karma of false ideas of ignorance and of the cycle of life and death, one cannot but fail to be alarmed. Aged and experienced arhats, who have attained to samādhi, always used to knot their brows and say that the Buddha strongly forbade anyone to teach the law of reality, while they still possessed a heart of karma revolving in life and death. Nevertheless, in spite of such warnings, eight or nine out of every ten priests who wander over the land, like rain clouds passing back and forth without any fixed abode, talk loudly without any proper knowledge or due study and say all sorts of things about there being no difficulty or doubt concerning the great teachings of the thousand and seven hundred traditions of light—the model subjects of meditation. Many of these men get very excited, they raise their fists, or hit the mats on which they are sitting and they spit out sounds from their mouths which are supposed to signify inexpressible truths. If one does not take care one will find that one has come upon a man who does not rely on any discrimination or even have any merit from study or learning. He may be even ignorant of ideograms, stubborn and narrow minded without any vision at all. One cannot but ask what is the source from which they have derived their fearful, knavish and inadequate manner of life. Have any of them been to India or to China, or what have they been in previous times—let them but go on vociferating as they do, they will at last lose all their 'scent' and voice. Their attainments are not sufficient to be medicine to cure even a toothache.

It is a most deplorable thing that these men, who have the qualifications for becoming chiefs, and the abilities of divine beings, and who could, if they spent their energies in meditation, pile up merits—men who trace their traditions back to Tago, Baso (d. 788), Sekito (d. 790) or from Rinzaï (d. 867) or Tokusan (Ezon d. 592) and who therefore might have grown to be cool shade trees for the whole world, and who were sprouts about to rise up and tower above other men, should just at the most important time have accepted false interpretations having no foundation of tradition in the line of the law. And because of this they now say of those whom they see exhausting their spirits in meditation and learning that they are merely men running about enquiring about useless matters, and they laugh

penetrated through to knowledge of the original of his own selfhood Gen sha (d 908) was once weeping while riding on an elephant's back. He fell off and broke his left leg, but he penetrated through to the very bones and marrow of the truth. Rinzai had to swallow much bitter criticism, and he broke up his home and dispersed his household. Such was the sort of behaviour shown by searchers both in ancient and modern times. During all that course of time there was not one patriarch or sage, in all the three periods (past, present or future) who did not possess a nature which could discriminate between things. But in these times of ours men rely only on the self-willed and empty emotions of their own breasts, and think it sufficient if they can discriminate and understand just the things which lie at their own feet, and that is why they are unable to break through the devil's net, or Mara's net of false imaginations throughout their whole lives. This is the 'Little Wisdom' which is such an obstruction to the Bodhisattvas. This 'Little Wisdom' consists of men like these.

It is said that, in old times when Zen was flourishing, great men of the warrior class, who set their minds on attaining to the correct spirit of meditation, used to take a company of seven or eight robust soldiers with them, mount fine horses and gallop round through such busy places as Asakusa and Ryo goku where there were crowds of people, as though they were performing some important business, and they did this on the day of leisure when they were about to retire from public duty. They did this, it is said, in order to test themselves. They wanted to see how strong was their will, their purpose, how much concentration or lack of concentration they themselves had, with a view to carrying on their meditative life to perfect attainment. Had they attained sufficient will power for their purpose during the time of their life of activity in the world?

Shinsaemon Ninagawa, for instance, on his way to the battlefield attained great insight and power. Ota Dokwan (founder of the city of Yedo) while leading his men into battle composed poems. One aged arhat who had performed the preparatory duties and finally completed the full course of meditative discipline at a time when packs of wolves used to prowl around and even attack his village, went out and spent seven nights sitting in vigil at various graveyards near the village, and he said that he did this because he wanted to find out whether his spirit

condition which dulls the mind By carrying on the combat with enthusiasm in the correct spirit, one may go on till there is an entirely unexpected attainment of enlightenment Here are some instances of this fact

There was that Bodhisattva, Yu Se He had transgressed the great prohibitions and could find no place for repentance All he could do was to disturb his mind with his grief But as soon as he had taken the great vow, he entered into the state of meditation eliminating his silent griefs when suddenly enlightenment came to him, as to an arhat who realizes that life is not produced by any external power

So, too, Ummon Taishi, attained enlightenment after he had broken his left leg I zen of Mount Mo, suffered from diarrhoea day and night for hundreds of days till his body was painful and weary and death faced him But he took the great vow, sat in meditation overcoming his pain and before long his intestines rumbled and moved many times and suddenly his illness was cured as if it had been wiped away He had reached the point of great attainment

Tai-en Ho-kwan Kokushi (known as Kaku-en, 1031-1098, a Tendai priest under Fujiwara Yorimichi, the Regent of our country) was expelled by the priests of Enryaku ji, of which he had been made Abbot, only three days after his arrival at the temple He went to the Flower Garden of Glory—that is the Imperial Palace, and visited the aged teacher, Ko-san of Shotaku ji there, and told him of his troubles That temple, however, reviled and drove him away with blows He became terribly angry, and as it was a very hot day he went off into a bamboo grove, where he sat without a stitch of clothing on him, and there he meditated in weariness When the night came, millions of mosquitos swarmed on to his naked body and devoured him He resisted scratching the terrible irritation gritted his teeth, *clenched his fists and sat on still meditating in a foolish way* Several times he nearly lost consciousness, until all of a sudden he received enlightenment

In still more ancient times there was Jo-go, the world revered one (Purusa?) who went into the Himalaya mountains and carried on his ascetic discipline for six years until he was nothing but skin and bones, and his hair, like reeds of grass, hung down below his elbows and knees And E ka Taishi (d 593, the Second Ch'an Patriarch in China) cut off his own arm and

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of meditation was strong enough to remain unbroken even when the wolves came sniffing about him, smelling his neck and ears

Sho-ku Shonin of Shosha, the Sutra copyist, used continually to sigh, because when worldly thoughts were prolific and fertile then his thoughts of the Way were few and light, but when he had prolific thoughts about the Way then he found that worldly thoughts were few and light

When I review all that I have written above and look at it carefully, it seems to me that I have just gone on writing prolifically, merely repeating worldly ideas—just babbling on and writing things that it will be difficult for anyone to comprehend. So perhaps I ought to wag my tail and beg for pity, because there is now nothing left for me in these last days of my life here in this temple of Kokurin ji, and I am really half dead and half alive, with only a little breath left in my body, and the Morning star and the moon are setting for me. It is not my part now to plant myself in the way of obtaining authority, nor is it for me to fish in the worldly waters of fame. All that I now ask for is that I may just be able to assist men a little in their higher 'Way nature'. Perhaps also I may be able to help a little in the way of learning about the infinite vows of the law, and also in assisting those men who are performing the charitable duty of teaching the law to others and trying to hand it on to those who will come after them.

There is a saying that it is easy to get hold of a thousand ordinary soldiers but difficult to find a good commanding general so if you can lay hold of even a little in this letter of mine and with its help assist and enlarge the higher 'way nature' of your Lord so that his learning of the way of meditation may be brought to perfection then some waves of this teaching will assuredly overflow and reach the hearts of those whom your Lord controls. And if those near to him on his right and left are bathed in these waves of water then some of the water, even if only the troughs of the waves, will certainly reach to all people in the whole castle. And further, if those waves bathe the whole castle, then the troughs will go on till they reach all the people throughout the whole land. And the reason for this is that the heart of the one is the heart of a million. At last it would reach the whole world. At the highest level the Lord will feel its influence, and below, all the common people will receive much benefit. If this happens there will be

no government to compare with such a one in any other state.

Such is the tiny purpose of this old priest's daily life. If it were not so, why ever should I burn my solitary lamp all night long, continually rub my tired eyes, and write words of this sort over and over again and send them even when I have not been asked for them? If you can find anything in this letter which seems at all reasonable then do not throw it away, but read it through carefully. Then bring yourself into harmony with this secret art of Introspection, which is a means of preserving life, and so get both your body and spirit into good health. I trust you will then speedily attain to that power which meditation brings and that you will soon obtain that joy which belongs to the 'land of fulfilment, where cause and effect do not operate'.

My second prayer is that, by means of the increased energy which you may obtain through this method of introspection, you may preserve your life as long as did Takenouchi Sukune, and the child of Urashima. Then, you will be of true assistance to your Lord in his management of his estate, and you will be a comfort because of your compassionate heart to the ordinary people on his lands. And in your inward heart you will protect the 'Treasure of the Law', be satisfied even to repletion, with the joy of that law and the happiness of the meditative life until you reach the full attainment of the law. That is the whole of my thought and purpose for you.

Ever since I reached middle life I have been of the opinion that there is no better state of life for the voluntary undertaking of the meditative discipline than the life of the warrior. A warrior can never, day or night, permit any cowardice or weakness in his body. Whether in his public duties or in his social life he has to be very careful and strict. He must see that his coiffure is properly set. His ceremonial dress, his 'hakama' and 'haori', his long and his short swords must be carefully attached to his girdle. His manners and his every movement must be such that his inner spirit, as it were, overflows so as to be evident to all who meet him. And think of him as he is mounted on a fine and powerful steed, advancing against millions of enemies—going forward through their midst as if he were in a great open space without any people in it. His expression of face is that of one who will cut through and break down all his foes. That is the bright and clear spirit of meditation. When the warrior goes forth in that spirit he may attain in one month to spiritual

energy which would take the ordinary priest who deliberately leaves the world a whole year or more to attain to. What one who leaves the world would need a hundred days to acquire of spiritual power, such a warrior may have the fortune to obtain in three days.

Unfortunately many warriors do not set their minds or wills on acquiring this good fortune, and do not know how such a spirit as this may give them true guidance, so when they are mounted on the black backs of their sleek horses they all unknowingly pile on forty bushels and twenty gallons—a truly heavy load of ignorance and imagination, and they go on their way with forbidding looks and distorted faces, riding after each other and slashing away with their swords where ever they happen to be. Is this not a lamentable habit of the present times? Men who are passing through places like that, where the true spirit of meditation could be preserved so well, yet say that there is not even a small crack of opportunity for them, because of their official business, to carry on any meditation—such men can only be likened to men swimming in the ocean and yet looking for water!

In the Sutra of the forty two chapters it says 'There are twenty difficult things for those who are in exalted and noble positions when trying to learn the Way'. This is very true! From kings down to common men there are numberless people who have glory, fame, wealth and honour, but if one were to sweep the world one could not find one man amongst them all who so feared the painful Wheel of ever revolving life that he set himself to learn the essentials for escaping from that cycle of existence. This is the gist of our teaching which does not differ at all from the views expressed by the Golden Mouth of the Buddha. How can one expect to find any good Karma results in a world where men only go on coveting wealth and fame and are never satisfied. Nor are they satisfied when they are seeking more and more luxury and honour.

Your Lord is about the only man who sees wealth and fame to be nothing but a 'Flower of Imagination in the Skies', and who knows that luxury and honour are of a piece with dreams and phantasies. He alone is always bending his mind and turning his thoughts towards the sublime and great Way. Three times he has been so considerate as to visit this old shack of mine. In ancient days the Prince Wu did that sort of thing in

his ardent desire to learn of the Way But he visited the temple of his time when he was planning to combine and unite the three lands (India, China and Japan) But your Lord did so because he was seeking to pass beyond and transcend the three worlds (past, present and future), in his desire to reach the further shore of Nirvana So though their acts seem to be similar the purpose inspiring them was different

In ancient times the reply to Prince Wu's three visits was made by the priest throwing away his plough and risking his very life And how, then, can I begrudge a few words in order to reply to the three kind visits made to me by your Lord? I have gone on writing this letter, wondering what is the best exposition of the Way to give, and my words do not satisfy me But I pray all the time that your Lord may raise his brows with joy when he reads them or hears them, and that his spirit may be strengthened At the same time I hope that perchance, I may help to provide a penetrating insight into the teaching of the law However, this latter business of advancing the teaching of the law is not at all the sort of thing that can be done merely by the use of forceful words or letters What is needed is that one should keep one's purpose fixed in the right direction towards the performance of the spiritual discipline, and then one will conform naturally with the great work

Your special messenger took up his whip in urgent haste the day before yesterday, before I had had time to compose a reply to your letter I am anxious not to seem remiss in my proper attention to you and your request Fortunately yesterday a man named Gizen told me that he is about to return to Ibara, so I was overjoyed as I could keep him to bring to you this reply For a whole night I did not sleep, but though during the night from twilight till dawn I had managed to put together five hundred lines, I do not feel that I have been able to put into them all that my heart wishes to write to you And in my old age I find that my memory is feeble, so that I have written at the end of the letter some things which I had already said in the beginning and repeated many things Also there are many circumlocutions and many crooked changes in the lines But there is no time to go through the letter again So I am closing it up and am going to place it in Gizen's sleeve pocket It is like putting in a chicken of So, calling it the phoenix of the elixir and sending it to the Lord

When you have given it a lightning glance through, I pray you to hand it to some children of grade C or D in intelligence, and then keep it a strict secret. However, if you do happen to find anything in it to take hold of, I will write it all again and present it properly. Then please let your Lord give orders to some of his secretaries to make three or five copies. Distribute these amongst three or five groups of students who live in the neighbourhood and are young, and also to Wada and his companions. Make them read it sometimes. And on days of leisure call together the people of Ko ko, Tsutsumi and Nakasawa and the old retainer physician, with six or seven older men. Put these men together in some room and make them listen to it. The Lord himself might perhaps sit on a cushion and doze while it is being read. It might help to strengthen his own sentiments about the Way. If half a day of leisure is spent thus pleasantly a state of joy in the law and happiness in meditation will become very evident to you all. You will not need to envy the 'Four Kings'²¹ or the happiness of To ri.²² You will be even beyond envying the world which has triumphed over Yama²³ and his soldiers. Still less will you feel any envy of the shameless repletion of the banquets of words, or the lightness and luxury of the pleasures of error, or the pitiless and shameful hallucinations which make deaf the ears of those who hear the 'Eight Voices of the Buddha',²⁴ and blind the eyes of those who dance in the ten thousand dancing halls. It is too marvellous to contemplate!

With this purpose then, and with great toleration, you will think of learners—those who are near by as well as those who are at a distance—think of them as a great audience of tens of thousands and entice them, and do this all in accord with the great vow of Bodhisattva hood seeking to become a teacher of the Way to all sentient beings—then there will come to you the unprecedented robes and crown of true wisdom even in the midst of the dust of life's business. And none knows if he may not be able to turn the sublime law wheel of all the Buddhas, even while he continues to wear his sword, seated on the saddle of his horse and riding up and down the roads. And then there is that well known saying: 'Under a strong General there are no weak soldiers'—so it may come to pass that under your flag numbers of men may appear like those influential warrior retainers—Kishi, Kyoki, Shinshi, Manji and Nomura or Tamura.

Then if by some chance a great crisis occurs, your general with his soldiers, though but one hundred against ten thousand cavalry, could march out with true vigour and boldness—and 'where life has not been seen—how could death be seen!' Such a company would be like the pushing forward of a rock or iron. They would be as calm as a mountain peak, they would be as swift as a hurricane. No place could withstand an assault by such men. No place which they touched would remain unbroken. Even if they found themselves in the midst of the battle-fields of the rebellions of the Gempei wars, they would stand firm as if they were in the middle of an uninhabited plain. Their will power would be that of determined and bold men. The soldiers they led would be trained and disciplined by a combination of the sentiments of gratitude to the law. Who amongst such men would begrudge his life for the sake of such a Lord? And if a man has no fears about life or death there will be no seeking for Nirvana. At such times for such men all the ten directions of the whole universe melt away into nothingness before one's eyes, all the three worlds of past, present and future become concentrated in one thought. And all this is due to the power which comes from true thinking and the true spirit of meditation.

When such a state of affairs comes about, then the warriors are respectful, the people cleave to their Lord. The Lord is benevolent. His ministers are just. The farmers have sufficient millet. The women have enough cloth for their dresses. All classes of the people love the Way. The pulse of the nation is calm as in the peace of mount Tai. There is no deterioration or diminishing throughout the ten thousand ages. And nothing can be found like the good karma results anywhere else amongst men or gods. The upper officials attain to true enlightenment. The acting officers, who know the law will not behave like aliens!

With deep respect

5th Day of the Summer Dragon Month of the Calendar, in its Fifth Sign. In the Era of Enkyo 9 (1744-1747).

Under a Sala Tree ³¹

One who has not yet become a Buddha,³² so that he may teach others

A writing by an aged priest

II

A LETTER WRITTEN TO A SICK MONK, LIVING IN A DISTANT PROVINCE

IT is very kind of you to have sent news so often by letter and message, and now again by kindness of a revered travelling teacher of the Zen doctrine, who has brought a delightful letter, which seems to enclose in itself a peculiar fragrance and freshness of quiet retirement. For some time we have been planning to make our pilgrim way²² to visit you, and we have been waiting to hear some good news that perhaps you have not been obliged by the state of your health to omit your religious duties, and that you have attained to the joy of full fruition, but now we are distressed to hear that since last summer you have been feeling very ill and have been obliged to enter the temple sick room. However, the report we have had from our revered travelling priest is better, for we hear that your condition is not so serious as we had feared, and two or three days before he left you, you had been able to enter again into the Worship Hall. So we are much happier about you now.

During a serious and long illness many anxieties and other emotions come to us all but we must leave such feelings and cares to the secular world and determine to set ourselves wholeheartedly to the important duty of preserving the right spirit of meditation. And I have reached the conclusion that one will not fall back or become negligent after a sickness when one has preserved that spirit of meditation throughout all the times one has been suffering the pains of illness, even if there be an entire reversal of one's fortune afterwards. So think of your time of sickness as a time of unusual importance, and do not be careless in preserving the right spirit.

Thirty years ago I, who am now an old arhat, wrote a report about sickness and the priesthood. I then pointed out that there is nothing so sad as the sickness of those who only have the wisdom of this world. In proportion to their worldly wisdom they continue to regret in unmeasured terms the times that are

宗峯妙超大師示衆
汝等諸人來此山中爲道緊要
莫爲衣食無有肩不掛無有口
不食只須十二時中向無理會
之處窮來窮去不顧軀命光陰
如矢慎莫雜用心勉旃々々

明和第五丁壬子己丑年正月十五日
遠孫深澤抄六十八歲老和尚白法

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past They find fault with everything, whether it is good or bad, in those who are caring for them as nurses They feel envious of the good fortune or leisure of their old associates. They are distressed because their own fame is not established during their own lifetime, and they are fearful about the long night of pain which is to follow their death When they think of their own native places they are angry because their own wings have not grown They fret because no favourable response comes to the prayers which they have offered to the gods When they are lying down with closed eyes they seem to be commendably calm, but inwardly a greater conflict is going on than was the battle of the Nine Countries, and their hearts are fuller of pain than are all the sentient beings in the three hells A sickness of only three pints size is imagined to be one of eight and a half quarts If they are so crazy about their illness when they are dying, one can only guess at the state they will be in after this life!

As we know that quiet thinking and the spirit of meditation is like a medicine for keeping in health, we would like to visit such persons and lend them our aid so as to enable them to think quietly, but if the very fact of quiet thinking is painful to them, then the fire of their hearts would only flare up the more, the metal of their lungs would only waste away all the more in pain, the moisture of their bodies would dry up, they would continue to feel cold and hot, and the sweat which steals away the very life itself would become more and more frequent till at last it would be difficult to sustain the roots of life And all these troubles are just due to ordinary every day carelessness and negligence of will to keep the spirit of meditation This negligence together with false illusions, turn what was only a little sickness into a really big illness So, it is not the sickness which has done the injury, but errors of the heart and mind which devour and kill In very truth, these errors of the heart and mind are more terrible than any tigers or wolves Tigers and wolves are not the kind of creatures which come into places enclosed by doors and walls or fences, but these wolves of error of thought climb up onto the floor of meditation, and destroy the quiet seat of thought They are wretches which clothe themselves arbitrarily in the seven and nine-fold robes of the priestly dress There are some sick people who do nothing but weep bitterly and say that there is no one so unlucky as themselves! They

borders of life and death, transcend the limits of perception and illusion and achieve that state which is called the unbreakable, hard real body of the Diamond World. Is not this indeed, the discovery of the divine elixir of never growing old and of never dying? Is it not the very recollection of one's own birth into this world of humanity? Is it not the dignity attaching to the shaven priesthood? Is it not the spiritual experience of the mystery of the Way of the Buddha?

When a man, who comes to the correct method of meditation, confronts good luck or bad luck, a good fate or a sad reversal of fortune—all these things become for him the food which strengthens him to the performance of the Way. But in the case of a man who is negligent and lazy in this spiritual matter, even quite a trivial matter, such as sickness no bigger than a mustard seed becomes an enormous obstacle to his progress. Such a result is, in the final analysis, the effect of works done in a previous existence. There is an entire absence of *Prajna* Wisdom. But those sorts of people always give excuses and reasons for drawing away from that real wisdom, which is in fact not really far off. They plant and raise obstacles to the performance of the Way—obstacles which have no real roots! There is nothing so sad and bitter as an error of life like that!

On the other hand, there are many instances of men in ancient times, who though suffering from severe illnesses yet broke down all the effects of doubt. There was an old priest, called Nagagoro Saru, who suffered from a bad boil, so that his back swelled up like a bright red winter melon, and the pain was almost unbearable. The only things he could swallow were hot medicines, and he could not let people come near to him. He just closed his eyes and lay on his bed in agony. One day some affectionate friends, who were associates in the law, came to enquire after his health and to comfort him. The surgeon also came that day to clean the wound and to put on some plasters. That night, however, his pain became worse than ever. It was truly unbelievable that such a material thing as that boil would cause such terrible pain on such a precious body as his for so many long days! When his friends were leaving, in order to soothe and comfort him, they said that today it seemed as if the flesh was healing so that he would not have long to wait now for the delightful and pleasurable feelings of restored health. But the old priest, looking as if he had only just awakened from

complain with tremulous voices that it is dreadfully hard that they should waste away in these bodies of theirs, which, as they say, only come to them at rare intervals in the cycle of karma existences, and even when they may have reached so high as to attain to the state of priesthood—in spite of all which, they say they have not been able to heap up any merit for themselves by their faith in the Way, and they have not seen the light of Buddha's Way. Perhaps their complaints may seem sincere and even charming—but their state is only the result of their own negligence and carelessness caused by ignorance.

As a matter of fact there is really no better time than sickness for the performance of the duties of learning the Way. In ancient times many wise men used to conceal themselves in valleys and under cliffs in the deep mountains for the purpose of escaping as far as possible from connection with the world and to keep themselves apart from the secular business of life, so that they might be the better able to give themselves up wholly to the performance of the duties of the Way. But there is no mountain or valley to compare with illness. When one is sick one does not need to seek for any other mountain or valley. The sick person escapes the tiring toil of going his round in the labour of alms-collecting. He avoids the duties of entertaining visiting priests and other guests. He is not troubled by the noisy and idle talk of large assemblies. The sick person does not suffer from the disturbing labour of the temple halls. He does not feel the anxieties of scarcity recurring after better times in the regular course of the temple life—he can leave the matter of life or death in the hands of Heaven. He entrusts the care of his body, whether it is to be kept warm or cold and his hunger to his nurses. He does not have to worry about his body any more than do cats or dogs when they are sick. The one thing the sick person should not forget when he is between the quilts of his bed is to make it his first determination that he will preserve the spirit of meditation. He will remember that life is but a dream, that death too is but a dream. He gives up his ideas about heaven, hell, this world, paradise. In the twinkling of an eye, he turns towards that place where no busy world affairs can trouble him, and he can examine and overhaul his thoughts about the principles and truth of things. He makes perseverance in preserving the spirit of meditation the very chiefest of his tasks. And then he may, almost without knowing it, cross the

to the recognition of the real truth that life and death, the Buddha and all demons or spirits are in essence but one I have in fact, now penetrated through to the realization of the mystery of Diamond hardness, that the dharmas or elements of existence are in reality but of one essence From this very day I know that, no matter what reversals of fortune may befall me, there is nothing which can be an obstacle to my enlightenment Oh! that many others might also seek for a little understanding and attain to some of the energy which will wake them up so that they may rise up as I, this foolish old man that I am, have been able to do! I repeat again that when a man is in health, he must not be negligent about his meditative life This sickness of mine has been a gracious sickness and there is nothing for which I am more thankful! The more I think about it, it seems to me that this boil has been of unsurpassed benefit in providing me with true wisdom! And now when I ponder over the sort of spiritual duty which I ought to perform and what amount of praise I should offer, I almost regret that this boil is being cured! The old priest concluded with a bright smile That is what we have been told by the friends who were attending him at the time

Or again there was that hermit revered as one of the teachers of the Shingon sect, who was taken ill with a severe attack of typhoid fever His groans never ceased by day or night, so that the young attendants who heard him, impertinently said that 'This is not at all like the old man's real disposition And the noise he makes is not like his scoldings which he gives us—just listen to that moaning and groaning!'—That is how they laughed at him But the old hermit laughed too, and said 'Hello! there, you young fellows! The groaning you have been listening to for several days past was just the noise caused by my disease, but now, today it has changed It has become the sound of a great mystery! If you laugh at me now in mockery, you may receive the punishment due to those who make a mock of the true law! The young acolytes thereupon changed their attitude and said that the old hermit had become a very god He had suddenly and quickly attained to Buddha hood—as quickly as a man can turn over his hand The old hermit went on 'Now, the Buddha passed through the three stages' to Nirvana for the sake of sentient beings who are negligent of their meditative life, and for the sake of those others who are

a deep sleep, said that it was very kind of so many good friends to have come to visit him, and he wanted to confess something to them. He had hitherto been ashamed to say it but he did not wish to conceal it any longer. Would they please come up close to his bed and listen. Then he continued "The pains of this sickness have taught me a valuable lesson. By the help of this boil I have learned to see the faults of the past twenty years of my life. Now, at long last I am feeling the joy of the accomplishment of what has been the true purpose of my life for forty years. Before suffering this boil I used to think that there was nothing lacking from what I believed to be a state of enlightenment, and I thought there was nothing lacking in the religious discipline which I was carrying on. But for that very reason I ceased performing the correct discipline. I was bold enough to accept all kinds of ceremonial honours. I behaved discourteously towards people. And then suddenly I sank under this severe sickness, when all my five limbs began to boil with heat, my joints felt as if they would break to pieces. I sometimes fainted and my mind became closed. I felt, indeed, the pains of the hell of blackness. The totality of all the hot hells seemed to be gathered in this little body of mine—and what I had thought to be my enlightenment and vision disappeared. I could not get even one dram of energy—nothing was left to me but vain thoughts and pains. Oh! it was dreadful. Certainly no one would be likely to envy me if I were to die in such a state of pain and distress! It did not seem that my life could be saved. However, I then set myself to perform the duties of meditation correctly, deciding in myself that unless I fought to the limit of my powers I should never be able to overcome pain nor should I be able to be victorious in my meditative life. So I exerted myself to burning point, and persevered boldly and courageously, and though once or twice it became almost too painful for me to carry on yet I did succeed in repeating over and over again and progressing without ceasing till somehow or other I won the victory. I permitted no limit of day or night, nor did I allow anything to become an obstacle, whether I was lying down or standing up, till at last the spirit of meditation matured in me, as it were, before my very eyes. And now, for the past fourteen or fifteen days I have felt that the illusions and pains of my life have melted away like mist or cloud, so that not only is there a great peace in my mind, but I have come

Even if death is not immediately imminent, a man will be a true descendant of the patriarchs if, at the time of his death, he has performed joyfully the discipline of spiritual meditation. Only, when I say this, I hope you will not think that I am advising people to wait for a serious sickness before starting the meditative life. Everybody who, in spite of not being in good health, has bravely and continuously, day and night, like those others whom we have mentioned, thoughtfully attended to this matter—everyone, I say—ten out of ten, a hundred out of a hundred—will bring to maturity the Way. At any rate it is clear that there is nothing so precious and so important as this duty of the meditative life. Let those who have not straight forwardly entered the enlightenment, go to a reliable guide and begin this decisive work from the start. After the first decisive step has been taken, the chief thing to remember is never to cease from the spirit of meditation, in whichever of the four postures one rests. As the sage, Dai e Zenji, said, 'One can never know whether one may lose the "place" or opportunity, or when one may find it—therefore wherever one may be, one must carry on one's discipline.' And all the sages who followed him showed this sort of carefulness in the performance of the meditative life. This is, in very truth, the correct, ancient and unchangeable form of the meditative discipline. It is known as 'The True Heart', 'The Buddha Nature', 'Bodhi', Nirvana, or 'The True Constant Man'. The 'True Man' of this nature, never throughout the ages or in this latter age of 'Destruction' has any sensation of sickness, nor will the colour of his nose become dyed! In the Sutra of the Lotus, the man of this nature is highly praised as being the manifestation in bodily form of the most ancient Buddha who was the first to be manifested in all the cycles of the ages.

In the Patriarch Nangaku's book, *On the Forty Sixth Vow of Amitabha Buddha* (The Zui I Gan Gyo) these words occur, 'What was called the Lotus Law in the Vulture Peak is now in the western land called Amitabha. In the last times it will be called Avalokitesvara (Kwannon). He is really speaking of this 'True Man'. This 'True Man' must be served with reverence, and approached with courtesy. If one comes near to him with a friendly feeling, there is no sickness which cannot be cured, there is no Way which cannot be accomplished. Even a sick old woman or an emaciated old man, in the Buddha Way, provided

bold and courageous in that life he taught that Buddha hood can be attained in an instant,—in a flash I myself indeed suffered pains which were hard to bear, and my suffering was of things which have no reality in their nature. Also I spent my time in fear of the pains merited by me which might come to me in the coming life. Also I wept in repentance of the works done in my previous life, but now my thoughts have been changed. I have entered into the perception of the uniqueness of Vairocana! So then, I closed my eyes, grit my teeth and immediately found that I have begun to progress in diligence and, Oh! how wonderful it is! All the pains of my sickness have been wiped away and melted off me! This old body of mine which had been lying so sick has been revealed to me as the very Darani²³ 'Treasure Seal' of the Yoga mystery!²⁴ and all unknown to me the true body of the Diamond Hardness has been brought to maturity in me. So the voices of my groans have changed and they are now united with and mixed with the great 'daranis of the Three Mysteries'.²⁵ The bed on which I was lying is now the great Mandala throne of Vairocana's real nature. The four fold rounded altar of the Mandala now shines out brightly before the eyes of my mind! Oh! how happy I am! All things which exist and possess the Buddha nature and also all things which exist apart from that nature had now been perfected in the Way—reached the goal of the Way. Herbs, trees, the very earth itself had brought to fulfilment their primary and original desire to attain to Buddha hood!'

The group of his attendants did not, of course, understand the things which the old priest told them merely by hearing his words, but they congratulated themselves on having been in the company of such bright sunshine shed forth by the Buddha mercy. They could not refrain from reporting what they had heard and seen and they did so with tears of joy. Never was there greater activity in the Way!

In foreign lands too, there were men, like To-yaku of Shu ko, Ri shitsu of Mount Ko, both of whom, as well as not a few others, made progress in the 'Heart Way' of the Buddha, through sickness. Unfortunately the priests of our land and of this age have not benefited by sickness and, Oh, dear! there seems to be a lack of lustre amongst them! Why is it, I wonder, that we are so much worse than the men of old time?

with people of that sort. They have come to think that virtue consists only in admiration of great and beautiful things, and that if a man merely believes the forms of faith, he has reached perfection in attainment of the law. It is very lamentable that they make use of their bodies merely to get fame for themselves—these bodies which are so hard to come by in the course of the cycles of existence—and they bury the Buddha Heart under the rubbish heap of illusions. They adorn themselves unstintingly with silks and damasks which do not harmonize with the ceremonies or ritual of any place. They scatter expositions of the Dhyana teaching and the Buddha laws without understanding it themselves. And with regard to their treatment of the white robed⁴ laity, what Komei Shibo said so eloquently, is quite true. 'They have the magic powers of a Maugdalana in getting hold of or stealing the alms of the laity which the laity have produced by the sweat of their brows.' They deliberately forget their beliefs in the law of karma when they want to obtain some short lived benefit for themselves. They relieve themselves of any fear of due recompense. But there is no mistake as to what will eventually happen to them. The last day of the winter solstice of their lives will come upon them, when but one solitary light is left alight and burning, then they will weep and wail on the verge of death. They will suffer the 'Seven Upsets' of faith and be filled with the panic fears of hell. They will wriggle and flounder about as they die without having any place to put their heads or their feet, and they will lie with face to the ground even in the presence of their disciples!

But when one remembers the disposition of the people of our times, is there anybody in any of our provinces who might not become a Buddhist patriarch, if he sincerely practised the rule of the meditative life? I ask myself, why should I teach these hard things to people who come to me at a dismal place like this in order to go into retreat. Here I live, in a tumble-down old house, quite separated from the world, but there is no easy going, heart calming Buddha law for me. But there is nothing worse, I think, than a religious monk who is proud and also treats his own body delicately!

One year, when a large pack of wolves roamed around this village at the foot of these hills, one old fool of a priest went and spent seven nights sitting in some of the graveyards. He did that so that he might test himself, for he wanted to see whether

he perseveres in preserving the spirit of meditation, may become a healthy, energetic person. On the other hand, even if one has a body seven or eight feet tall, and wisdom corresponding to the height, even if one has a rich supply of benevolence to explain the teaching, even if one is able to lecture on the 'Three Sutras' and the 'Five Sacred Books',²² even if one has studied thoroughly the secret teachings of the 'Five Schools of Thought' and the 'Seven Sects',²³ even if one has the full amount of required energy, and even if one's eyes can penetrate the universe—unless he possesses the uninterrupted spirit of meditation such a one is nothing but a corrupting corpse. No one should take an easy posture and determine that this possession of the spirit of meditation is an easy matter—for it is truly hard to preserve and to persevere in this life.

The saddest thing about this last kalpa or age of ours is that everybody is set on making his own name famous. The heart for obtaining wealth is flourishing. Many people make a show of possessing the Heart which is Searching for the Way, as if that were a sort of ornament to exhibit, yet it is hard to find anyone who has truly made up his mind to carry on the spirit of meditation. And it is still harder to find anyone who possesses the spirit continuously at all times—there is not one in a thousand, no! not one in ten thousand!

I myself came to see this when I was thirteen years old. When I was sixteen I broke away from the sexual life. When I was nineteen I left the world. When I was thirty five I came to live at this temple. Now sixty five years have elapsed. During the forty years of my middle age all business was given up and all secular avocations were omitted. I guarded myself with sincere application, and now for about five or six years I perceive that I am able to carry on the spirit of meditation without intermission. If, however, a man fawns on his temple patrons²⁴ and almspaying parishioners in a light hearted way, or if he is always hoping for benefits or some support or fame while trying to perform his meditation, that is just like having a great pain in one's inside. More often than not, in these days, teachers and pupils live together in the temples making luxury and opulence the object of their life. The atmosphere of the temple is one of heated busy crowds. Men think that the gift of the gab and being smart are wisdom. Their food is exquisite and their dress is superfine. The Buddhist world is now filled

and obsequiousness, and when he dies has a funeral attended by a thousand priests and the ceremonies are those of the seven treasures,⁴ and men's eyes are entranced by the brilliant funeral banners, and the mind is astonished by the gorgeousness of the mandala seat—yet if the eyes of Emma, King of Hell, are flashing with anger and the ox-headed devils are waiting with their whips twisting and twirling them—that will be a bitter, bitter thing!

What I have told you above is what was related to two or three attendant priests by the old priest, Sho ju. They listened to him from the first part of the hour of the Dog (8 p.m.) till the third part of the hour of the Ox (3 a.m.) and it seemed to them as though it were but an instant of time. Tears of gratitude ran down their faces, so deeply was what he told them impressed on their minds. And at the same time their bodies were wet with the perspiration of shame. After hearing this statement of the old priest, whenever I suffered from any sickness I would recall it to my mind and then I could never help but feel shame for my own imperfections, and it seemed to me that my pains became less. So I hope that by sending you just an outline of that old priest's statement my letter may be of some little help to you in your sickness, and also to those who are attending you in the hospital ward of your temple. It was this sort of medicine that the old priest, Sho ju, used to dispense as his normal treatment—just one ingredient in his 'Cold Shock Regulating' method of cures.

And here I will add another method which is especially good for weak people. It is a marvellous method of saving people from weariness of spirit. It allays the rush of blood to the head. It warms the limbs. It soothes the bowels. It improves the eyesight. It increases wisdom and it is especially efficacious for ridding the mind of false knowledge. The medicine is compounded in the following way, "Take one grain of soft cream of the elixir pill, one slice of "Recognition of the real aspects of all dharmas or elements of existence", one drop each of "knowledge that both the self and the dharmas are voids", three drops of "knowledge of how immediate entry to Nirvana is obtained", two drops of "No lusts or desires", three drops of "Realization that the life of Activity and the life of Quiet are not two separates". Add one-and-a-half of the minutest quantities of the skin of the sponge gourd, and one slice of "Ridding oneself of all

he could retain the spirit of meditation without interruption, even while the wolves sniffed round his ears and breathed down his neck. When any creature—even a naiad or a serpent—has made up its mind boldly to perform any duty, is it right for that creature to leave the duty unfinished? Surely that creature must not let the duty remain unaccomplished. He should endure any amount of cold or hunger, suffer any amount of rain and storm, go to the bottom of pits of fire, dive under ice, so as to keep open and awake the eyes which the Buddha has opened, so that he may reach the fields which the Buddha has reached, so that he may carry on to the bitter end the great work of religious teaching till he penetrates through to the final mystery. He must admonish the priests of all the ten regions of the universe. He must draw out the nails, and undo the linch pins (of falsehood) and so show his gratitude for the overflowing measure of Buddha's mercy.

If any man is zealous to such a degree in performing the great Buddha Vow, which causes cessation from the return to the cycle of existence, every sort of sickness will be crowded out of that man's life. But it must never be forgotten that everybody who has virtuously practised this discipline without negligence has experienced something of the bitter hardness of wearing the black robes of the first steps of discipleship, and of pity, and of the light. But if a man becomes negligent then he will become a devotee in outward show only. And when I say outward show, what I mean is that it will be only a sham. Though there is no one who wishes to be a sham, especially if that person has a body lacking no necessities, yet such people may easily become obvious examples of shams if they do not seek and accept the advice of good friends and do not seek the Way from the depths of their hearts but relying merely on their superficial understanding talk a great deal about it just for the sake of making themselves admired by their friends. So be careful in what you do persevere in carrying on the spirit of meditation, and then if things do not seem sufficient for you, you may go and starve yourself or freeze yourself to death in some distant valley or mountain. 'Gold wrapped in straw remains gold.' Let the Avatar deities place their hands together and pay their respects. Let the dragon deities bow their heads and give protection to him who is a true descendant of the Buddha! On the other hand even if a man has piled up treasures by his flattery

the mind, then one will begin to notice a delicious and rare odour. There will come a feeling of softness of touch to the skin. One's body and mind will become entirely harmonized and in accord with each other. Immediately all the Skandhas or elements of existence are dissolved. Also one's internal organs become calm and quiet. A lustre shines on the skin, and the bodily energy is greatly increased.

If one repeats this sensation from time to time in its completeness, then there is no sickness which cannot be healed. There is no mystic act which cannot be performed. For this is indeed the mystic secret of prolonging life, the mystic art of immortality. This treatment originated with Konsen Shi, and later was handed down to Chisha Taishi. He was cured by it of a severe disease. It also saved the life of his elder brother, Chui Shin. It is the mystical treatment handed down to us from the final age of the era of Gyo. But, how seldom do the men of our times attain to the knowledge of this Way.

I myself heard of it in my middle life from Haku-yu, who told me that its efficacy, and the speed with which it will take effect, depends upon the zeal or lack of zeal with which it is carried out by the one who undertakes it. If one is zealous and not negligent in practising it, one will attain to long life. And, now, please do not say, 'Oh, old Hakuin is expounding a method of meditation for old women.' Try it, and you may obtain knowledge of the Buddha Voice. Then you will be able to clap your hands and laugh with glee.

As has been well said, 'Until one has experienced the disorders of a rebellion, one does not see the virtue of the honest minister of state. Until one has come into the possession of wealth, one does not know what is the will of a righteous man.'

attachment to things" Soak all the above seven ingredients for a whole night in patience, and pound it up in a drying shady spot Discipline oneself according to the precedents set for one in the *Prajna Paramita Sutras* Make all this up into a ball the size of a duck's egg and place it restfully on the top of your head'

But he who undertakes this cure must not begin the discipline by asking such questions as 'What sort of medicine is this?' or 'How heavy is it?' All he has to do is to remember that an egg-sized pill with a delicious scent, feeling like cream, is resting on top of his head When the sick person needs to use this medicine he should place a thick cushion under him for his seat, straighten his back, close his eyes and sit in an upright posture Then move his body gently backwards and forwards and settle down to his meditation There is nothing to compare with this method of cure for prolonging life and nourishing the spirit When the spirit is exhausted then the body dies—just as when the people deteriorate the state will perish

Think over this whole matter three times Repeat the sensation which will come to you There will be a wonderful sensation throughout your whole body, when you have that medicine placed on your head—a medicine like a duck's egg made of cream! Your head will begin to feel damp Then the whole body will begin to feel damp from the shoulders to the elbows, both breasts, the diaphragm, the lungs, the liver, the stomach, the back down to the buttocks Next all the constrictions in the chest, all the pains of the body, constipation, indigestion, all of these troubles will be calmed down in company with the mind—as surely as water seeks the low levels One's voice will become clear, and one's whole body will become filled as it were with flowing water till even one's legs become warm right down to the soles of the feet This sensation should be repeated by the person who is practising meditation The overflowing of this penetrating moisture saturates and steeps the body in warmth It can be compared with a medicine which a good secular physician prescribes, when he has collected various herbs, brewed them and filled up his bowls with the mixture and then bandages them on our bodies below the navel

While experiencing this sensation, provided one preserves the thought in one's mind that all objects of sense are but ideas in

of two distinct natures, but they are identical—that is of one nature. All aspects of the universe—the relative and the absolute—are but one in reality. Such is a brief summary of the teaching of the Buddha's Way.

As a matter of history, in the time of the first World Revered One, there were the 'quick' or 'sudden' teachings, the 'gradual' and the 'secret' or 'mystic' teachings. By use of these various forms of teaching, the World Revered One taught that though there were 5,408 volumes of scriptures, yet the ultimate purport of them all might be found contained within one section of the eight volumes of the Law of the Lotus Sutra. And still further, the ultimate purport of that Law of the Lotus Sutra, with its more than 4,360 ideograms, might be found contained within the 'Five Ideograms'—Myo Ho Ren Ge-Kyo (Wondrous Law Lotus Blossom Sutra). And the meaning of these five ideograms is contained in the two words, Myo Ho or Wondrous Law. And in the final analysis these two words are, in effect, contained in the one great word, MIND.

Now, if you want to know what this great word MIND leads us to—think of that ancient poem which runs thus: "The tortoise crosses the hills of separation—and what does it reach at the end? If you wish to know what it is which spoils the eternal purpose of the Spring time, stop using your needle and keep silence—then you will know."

Consider this word 'One Mind',⁴⁶ which is the wondrous law. When looked at from the aspect of extension or outwardly, it embraces the ten regions of the Universe. When looked at from the aspect of intensity or inwardly, it is reduced to an essence of non thought or non mind. It was this which the World Revered One meant when he taught that outside mind there are no elements (Dharmas) of existence, and that the three worlds, the whole of existence, exist in the mind alone, and that all aspects of reality are but One. And so the conclusion of his teaching is that the ultimate truth is called the law of the Lotus Blossom, and the eternal Buddha. In the Zen teaching it is known as the 'Original Dignity of the Person'. In the Shingon teaching it is the 'Sun's Disk of Fundamental Non Birth'.⁴⁷ In the Ritsu teaching it is the 'Essence of the dharma nature' (producing a state of sub- or super-consciousness). Please remember that all these are but different names for the one mind. But perhaps you will ask: "What evidence is there for the state

III

A REPLY TO AN AGED NUN OF THE HOKKE SECT

IT seems that you have read a resumé of some of my lectures on the Law of the Lotus Sutra, delivered this last autumn. In them I said that 'Outside of the mind there is no Lotus Sutra, and outside the Lotus Sutra there is no Mind'. You tell me that you think this a strange idea, and you ask me to explain by letter the meaning of my statements. You also say that you would like me to add any other suggestions which I think might be helpful in elucidating the subject. So here is a letter giving the main purport of the lectures, and I hope you will not mind reading it over several times so as to get the ideas thoroughly into your mind.

Yes! It is true, as we have always taught, that outside or apart from the mind there is no Lotus Sutra, and outside or apart from the Lotus Sutra there is no mind. Outside the mind there are not 'Ten Worlds'^a of illusion and of 'Enlightenment'. Nor is there any Lotus Law Sutra outside of these Ten Worlds. This is indeed the highest point of reasoning attained by meditative thought. And it is not I alone, but all the Tathagatas of the three ages (past, present and future), and the scholars and saints of the ten regions of the universe, who, at the final stage of their teaching, explain the matter in this way. All of them have said that the substance of the teaching of the Lotus Sutra is directed to establishing this great truth. Of course, it is the case that besides this essential teaching of the Lotus Sutra, there have been promulgated the 'eighty four thousand schools' of the Law of the Buddha, but these are all considered to be concerned with accommodated truth, and none of them can be excluded from that sphere of accommodated truth.

The final teaching, however, is that reality can only be explained as being of one nature only. All sentient beings, the Tathagatas of the three ages and ten regions, all mountains, rivers, this great earth, and the very Lotus Law itself are not

same originating impulse as the heaven and the earth. It is of the same 'substance' as the universe. It has not altered in the least since before the ages began, nor will it alter in the least after the ages end. So when the Reverend One extolled the wondrous law as being the essence of the Buddha mind, and when he called that wondrous law of the Buddha mind (using a simile) the Lotus Blossom Sutra he was merely using different names for one and the same thing—the One Mind. One reality—two names—just as the name *mochi* signifies the same thing as *O kachin* (Rice cake).

Now, if this real, essential, Lotus Law sutra is something which cannot be touched with the hands nor seen with the eyes, how does one get hold of it? What sort of preparation is needed for a person to become a practiser of this Lotus Law sutra? Well! There are three kinds of dispositions. There is the lower grade activating impulse. This makes one take hold of the golden scroll and its red lacquered holder, and just read intone or copy or expound it. There is the medium grade activating impulse. This makes one get hold of it by illuminating or reflecting it in one's own mind and there is the upper grade activating impulse which reads the Sutra with the eyes and penetrates through its depths and sees it as if it were one's own face. This is what is meant in the *Maha para nirvana sutra* (*Nehan kyo*), where it says, 'The Tathagata sees the Buddha Nature with his own eyes.'

The practice of this Lotus Law is the ultimate end of the devotional discipline of the Mahayana teaching, and it is by no means an easy matter. What is easy is very easy, but what is hard is very hard. So in the text of the sutra itself it says that, 'This sutra is hard to hold but if one holds it for a short time that person immediately feels joy.' This is what all the Buddhas have taught about it. And it is of supreme importance to practise it. Chisha, founder of the Tendai sect in China, said, 'Even without taking this scroll into your hands, be reading it all the time. Without repeating the words with your mouth be intoning this whole ritual wherever you may happen to be. The Buddha without expounding the law is always hearing the sound of the law. Without bringing thoughts into his mind he is all the time enlightening the whole universe.' That is the only correct method of reciting this sutra.

And then one asks tentatively, 'What sort of sutra is this,

ment that the five ideograms 'Myo-ho-ren ge kyo' signify the fountain source of the one mind I reply that surely the very words themselves provide sufficient evidence. The words are the title of the book which sings the praises of the merit and power of the mystery of the mind. They are a phrase pointing to and illustrating the marvellous nature of this one mind.

Think first of some lesser matters (which will illustrate this point). Think of the work which one does with one's hands—painting pictures and such arts. We say that so-and-so has the wondrous art of playing the harp or of playing the guitar. But if you proceed to ask where does that wondrous art reside—not even the greatest orator can find words to give a good answer. A father is not able to teach, by words, his beloved child that art which comes down from father to son. When it is this wondrous art it is something which is produced by an operation unknown to us. This is the mind nature operating as the wondrous law in men's daily activities. You will perhaps read laugh at, or argue about this letter, but, all the same, is it not a remarkable thing that out of every five, or ten persons you meet, every one of them continues to perform his or her own functions without error—just like a ring which goes on spinning out its thread endlessly? And if you ask what it is which goes on functioning automatically and endlessly and freely like this—then look inwards and you will find that it is nothing that you can discover by smelling or hearing. It is something entirely empty, neutral and without marks. If you make a guess that it is like wood or stone, you find that it is something which changes a thousand times—which has a thousand different appearances and is free and independent. If you say that it has a sentient existence, you find that that is not the case. Again if you say that it has no sentient existence, you find that it is a non-existent entity! So, as words fail to express it, the Revered One, has given this transcendent thing the provisional name of wondrous law.

And then there is the word 'scripture' or 'sutra'. The ideogram means or points to the idea of permanence, and the Revered One used it to signify the permanence of the Buddha nature. The Revered One used this word 'Kyo' (Sutra) with reference to the permanency of the Buddha nature. The mind nature is not increased when it exists in the Buddha nor is it diminished when it exists only within sentient beings. It comes from the

the Adhi (Buddha). When the patriarchs of all these families of doctrine urge us to go to meditation or to read the sutras—to read and re-read, to recite and re-recite, and to do so with single mind, and undisturbed heart, so that we may at last reach the fields of pure non-Confusion, they are teaching the truth accommodated to our conditions—are they not? The founder of Eihei-ji (Dogen) said, 'One day on which this duty is performed is much to be valued. One hundred years in which it is not performed are a hundred years much to be regretted.' Truly one cannot but shed tears of sorrow for those who live in the distressful and shallow sense-world, where they possess human bodies, which are hard to come by in the long cycle of the existences of karma ages, and yet never practise any meditation throughout all their human lives—they rot away like cats and dogs without any understanding, and are surely on their way back to those three regions of hell which they are so afraid of. What is hard is very hard indeed!

But it also says that 'what is easy is very easy'—and what then does that mean? I would reply to my questioner, asking him just to put out his hand to the Sutra and quietly hold on to the discipline of meditation, and make up his mind to look just once at the true dignified beauty of the Law Blossom. If only once a person catches a glimpse of the true dignity of the Law Blossom then everything—every action, even coughing, wagging one's elbow, sitting, talking, working, all shrubs, trees, tiles, stones, sentient beings and non-sentient beings—everyone of them will instantly become as perfect as the wondrous law of the Lotus Blossom Sutra. They will all and every one appear *as in true harmony with this sutra*. *Why then should anybody want to hold on to any other method?*

If anyone thinks that he can estimate the value of the Lotus Blossom Law without glancing at the real Lotus Blossom, he may be compared to a man who holds up a cup of water in his hand, determined to keep it day and night without spilling it or moving it, and prays that he may thus increase the sustenance for his body. Even if he succeeded in holding it up throughout his life, it is obvious that he would not thereby sustain himself, nor be able to satisfy his hunger or thirst or that of his family. He would soon lose all hope of carrying out such vows as those of the two benefits, i.e. to save himself by his own efforts and to save others. Of what use would a long perseverance in his hold-

then which one recites without holding it in one's hands?' Is it not the wondrous law in or of, one's own mind? And then those words quoted above, 'Without raising thoughts in one's mind one illuminates the whole universe'—what does this signify? Surely it signifies the real, essential Lotus Blossom? It is, what we call the sutra without words. People who just take the golden scroll and its handle into their hands and think that they are attached to the Lotus Law are like sick people who lick the paper on which the medical prescription is written and think that is a medicine which will cure their illness! Such people are in sad case. If you wish to hold on to this sutra throughout the twelve hours of the day and night, without a single speck of cloudiness or any break within you, then you will have to discipline yourself in the ment bringing work of non thinking of good and non thinking of evil. This is the correct method.

With regard to this, the sage, Jittoku Shi said in one of his gathas, 'If you wish to know what is the (Constant or) Non Originated,' do not let any threads be hung in your mind.' This sums up the correct meditative discipline from which all the Tathagatas of the three ages, all the wise men and all the great priests started, and which is the method by which they attained to the great enlightenment. It is the sum of their ancient and unchanging teaching. It is a matter of instantaneous non birth, of cutting off of before and after. So it is not unreasonable that the Tathagata should have told us that it is hard to hold on to this sutra, for it is the direct road to quick enlightenment and the attainment of Buddhahood. Practically all the sages and teachers of the 'Three Schools' are of the same opinion about this when they speak about the ultimate truth. They may perhaps have differed as to the depth and fineness of their own efforts to progress in the discipline and in the height to which they attained, but the direction of their steps has always been the same.

Each school gives a different name to this ultimate goal. In the Confucian teaching it is called the 'Highest Good' or the 'Un-originated Mean'. The Taoists call it the 'Void of Non Nature'. Shintoists call it 'Takama-ga Hara'. In the Tendai teaching it is the 'Great Instantaneous Samatha or Cessation of the Three Thousand Mental Activities'. In the Shingon doctrine it is called 'The Dharma of the Perception of the Non Birth of

Blossom? Well, we have learned that the wondrous law of the original existent entity is the one-mind—so there is nothing better for our purpose than our own mind. (*Make our own mind the object—in which to look for the Law Blossom*). And what is this mind of ours which we wish to look at? Is it something white? Or something red? Try every possible means to understand this matter. Be bold and resolute in your determination to consider this matter. Make a vow to study it day and night. Of course, there are many methods of coming to this study of the mind, but amongst them all, there is none which surpasses the method of practising the Law Blossom samadhi. Now concerning this Law Blossom samadhi, from the very instant when you make up your mind to practise it, begin by repeating the great formula and carry on without cessation, in grief and sorrow, in hardship or happiness, whether sitting down or standing up, whether sleeping or waking—continually repeat that formula 'Namu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo'. 'Hail Wondrous Law of the Lotus Sutra.' Make this prayer your pilgrim staff, your strength to rely on, and with deep hopefulness you will see through to the real dignity and beauty of the Law Blossom. Go on repeating the prayer. It is well to make each intake of breath and each expiration into a repetition of the formula carefully and ceaselessly repeating it. If you are careful to keep your mind concentrated on this phrase, before long you will find that the mind-nature has become settled in you—like a great rock, immoveable and peaceful, and your sensations will not be unrelated to those felt when one dwells on Mount Sumeru. But do not then leave off—rather be even more concentrated and incessant. Then what one often hears about will take place and the proper spirit of meditation will come upon you. All your usual, everyday consciousness will cease, and it will be as though you have entered the Diamond Circle, as though you were seated upon the Emerald Throne. You will have one discursive thought, and all of a sudden you will find that you are no different from one who has reached the depth of death. Then you may renew your breathing, and quite unconsciously the one, pure, un-confused truth, all, as it were, in one whole, will rise up before your very eyes, and you will instantly attain to the true dignified beauty of the Lotus Blossom. Then the Tathagata, the primeval and eternal reality, will appear before you, and nothing will be able to make him depart from you—even if

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

ing up the cup have been? But if a man fixes his gaze on the real essential Lotus Blossom and holds on to this sutra, that man might be compared to one who poured that cup of water into the rivers and lakes of the wide world. Immediately thirty-six thousand sparkling little waves would be formed, and the good quality of the water he poured in would act together with the great waters and help to nourish all creatures which fly, creatures which run, creatures which crawl, for they could come to drink at those waters without limit. He who does not look at the Lotus Blossom is like the man who holds up the cup of water. Not only does he not provide any benefit for others, he cannot even provide any benefit for himself. He who looks at the real essential Lotus Blossom is like the man who pours the cup of water into the great waters of the stream of this world's life. All unknowing he has poured it into the ocean of the great calm of all the Buddhas. There it is harmoniously united with the regulated wisdom of the true dharma kaya or law body of the Buddha. And at the same time it breaks to pieces the dark cave of the eighth consciousness. And it sends forth the bright light of the great mirror⁵⁰ of absolute wisdom, so that all the chief duties of the law are exhaustively fulfilled during the ages of illusion. One of the main merits of looking at the real essential Lotus Blossom is that in it there is no upper or lower, there are no four directions to face, nor are there any classes or parts in it.

It is better for men to set their gaze on the Law Blossom than to study, no matter how earnestly, all the other sutras. It is better for men to set their gaze on the real Law Blossom than to build towers to contain inexhaustible treasures. It is better for men to set their gaze on the real Law Blossom than to set up a million images of the Buddha. It is better for men to set their gaze on the real Law Blossom than to study all the mysteries of the three worlds. It is better to set the gaze on the real Law Blossom than to take up the golden scroll and its red lacquered handle and merely to become attached to that outward scripture. It is better to set the gaze on the real Lotus Blossom than to intone the Lotus Sutra a million times. Such is, indeed, the highest counsel of those who belong to the ranks of the accomplished practisers of the Law.

And what is the method by which we may penetrate through to see the real, essential, dignity and beauty of the Law

crawling into an empty hole and then quitting it and being satisfied with that sort of thing. What such people say is only the heretical outer teaching of some of the nature sects of India. If anybody were to confuse such teaching with the teaching of the sublime heart of Buddha, even the country bumpkins living at the back of the village would clench their fists and roar with laughter. Those who say such foolish things are persons who recognize a real existence of a soul. It is people like these who are criticized in the Surangama Sutra, where they are said to recognize men known to be bandits as their own children. They do not perceive the reality of the primary pure light. In particular they do not know about the Tathagata—they do not know that though he had completely destroyed in himself all the illusions, spoken of by the holy men who had attained to the four final results, though he had reached the truth about the dharma of the self, and was indeed supplied with mystic powers so that his fame had spread throughout the world, yet, even so, he would not allow that to be called the attainment of dhyana.

And so, too, it is said in the sutras, 'My disciples, even the great Arhats cannot expound the meaning of this. It is only the great Bodhisattvas who can do so'. And some people who have not even the merit of discriminating insight dare to call themselves venerable persons! What sort of mind is theirs?

To sum up—there is nothing which surpasses the repeating of the sacred formula, providing that all attachment to things is cut off. But one must not be one-sidedly attached to the merit of the repeating of the sacred formula. Do not think that the Shingon, or the Jodo teaching are worse or lower! People who belong to the Jodo sect, by merit of calling whole-heartedly upon the sacred name (of Amida), are quite assured that they will at some time have vision of the pure land of the one and only mind and the wonderful form of Amida Buddha. And so they ceaselessly carry on the repeating of their sacred phrase—as earnestly as if they were trying to save their heads of hair from catching fire! They realize that the Buddha is not far off from them. How is it possible that such people should not have the vision of the 'Tree of the Seven Treasures' and the 'Lake of the Eight Virtues?' And people who belong to the Shingon sect too—they have the sublime power of their marvellous mystic symbols—their daranis. They have assurance in their worship

you try to push him away! This is when you enter what is called, in the Tendai sect, 'The Calm of the Absolute, and the Treasure House of Calm and Perpetual Light'. This is when you will be lightened by what the Shingon sect calls 'The Sun Light of the Non-Origin of the Adhi Buddha'. This is when you accomplish what the Jodo (Pure Land) sect calls 'The Fundamental Purpose of Immediate Heart Birth into the Pure Land'. Now you will see before your own eyes the sublime wonders of the worship of the Buddha, the worship of the law and the worship of the order or Samgha—all the beautiful water birds in the trees of the forest. Now your eyes will be opened to see the truth that this universe and the absolute are identical. Now there can be no doubt that you will reach those fields of Amitabha's third vow, where trees, shrubs and the whole earth are gold with the attainment of Buddhahood. So, what is there in this world of men or in the land of the gods which can be compared with this? It was for this that the Buddhas of the three ages left the world for the religious life.

With regard to the efficacy of the sacred formula, there is no difference between one repetition of the phrase and the use of one model subject for meditation which we use in the Zen system. And an old priest like myself, would not write this sort of thing, if I thought I might be endangering my grey hairs by committing the sin of saying what I did not believe to be true. I have written lengthily and it might seem unnecessarily for there are the sages and holy men of the three ages and ten regions of the universe and more than eighty thousand deities in the land of the Rising Sun—all of whom will bear witness to the truth of what I have said. So do not have any doubt about this matter. Carry on without becoming negligent, and that feeling which, in Zen manner, we call—grasping the left hand and biting the middle finger—will grow stronger and stronger.

In these days it is often said by some people that it is useless to go to meditation, because they ask, When you have finished pondering over the model subject what will happen? If, they continue, one knows the heart of the Buddha by sudden intuition then why should one grieve if thoughts do arise in one's mind or be glad when thoughts cease to arise. Is not White Tree, the bandit of the mountains, better off just with his own innate being? When they say that unless lacquer is painted on, there will be no surface to peel off, it is foolish as a blind turtle

the purpose of obtaining the vision of the Buddha heart of the Wondrous Law in these days is comparable to the efforts of an eel to climb a tree! What a shallow idea! Just passing through life in darkness!

Here is a little story in illustration a farmer has many children to whom he purposes to distribute his surplus lands and fields One of his sons, however, is a weak, incapable, talkative and impertinent fellow This young fellow says, 'Nowadays it is unreasonable for poor fellows like us to have to learn the customs and ways of our ancestors, and to work at farming and to bring up large families Why! a duck might as well try to imitate a hawk or join up with a stork, and try to mend its wings when it is on the point of falling! Or a lame tortoise might as well try to imitate a carp, straining out its neck in trying to climb up a waterfall! It is altogether too ridiculous To go on in this way is nothing but a trick—like trying to drink water off a sickle! I can't understand it at all! Besides, people like ourselves, of the lower virtues, are no better than tired children—we cut, we mow, we cultivate fields where weeds are as thick as jungle grass We pour water over the fields, we plough, we sow seeds, we transplant seedlings, we plant little trees, we reap, we winnow, we grind the ears of corn, we twist rope, we weave matting we squat with our legs crossed and stare into nothingness! We live the ordinary humdrum life of farming peasants! It is all nothing but an old, old story! Everything seems to be set up in the wrong way! There ought to be some way in which we could pass through this life without having to put our arms through the sleeves of our working clothes! and go peacefully on! One would like to go and spend three or five days travelling around to places—to the places we hear about where there is no such thing as having a back without anything to wear on it—or a mouth without anything to put into it And especially, we would like to go to such places as those in somebody's land under some lord who is full of benevolence and supports people like us! In places like that nobody has to be in distress! But to have to work with one's hands and feet, and get one's living by one's own efforts—this is all just too bad a custom It is better not to make up all sorts of plans in your mind Just behave in the proper way Don't work too ostentatiously, or let it seem as if you are working too hard If you do happen to possess two or three old clothes,

of the great sun's disk, and the mystic symbol of the Adhi Buddha—just as do those who promote the meditative spirit by concentrating on the model subjects of the method taught by Zen. When people of that sect continuously rouse themselves to persevere in their ascetic discipline—so that Koya Taishi (Kobo Taishi), (774-835, founder of the Shingon sect in Japan), assured them that they would no more revolve round the cycle of existence—how is it possible that people like that should fail to polish and make perfect their true unbreakable Diamond Body?

And again, it is extremely foolish to think that one must wait till after one's death in expectation of obtaining all these benefits. It is also the most culpable negligence. Do not grieve as though this is all a matter of something in the far distance. If it was a matter of having to see or hear something in China or India, far beyond the seven fold tides of the seas, one might grieve. But what we are trying to do, is to look at our own mind with our own mind—and that is something closer to us than looking at the pupils of our eyes with our eyes. And do not grieve as if it were something very deep that we are trying to look at. If it were a matter of something to be seen or listened to at the bottom of the nine-fold chasm or under the thousand fathomed depths of the sea we might grieve—but to look at my own heart with my own heart is less than smelling my own nose with my own nostrils!

This age may be the final age, but the dharma is not the last age. To say that this is the final age, and therefore to reject the dharma and pay no respect to it, may be compared to starving and freezing oneself while actually entering the treasure mountain itself! And even if this is the last age, do not be afraid! (Fulfil the purpose of your life.) Think of the chief priest of the Eshin in temple (in the province of Omi), or still nearer to you, the resident priest of Akazawa, or Engu in the Yamashiro province—all of these men fulfilled the purpose of their lives by virtue of calling upon the Name. Honen Shonin (1133-1212, founder of the Jodo (Pure Land) sect in Japan), held this hope very strongly, but because he had no one to lead him at the time, he said that he felt that his wings were too short and he could not fly in the mid heavens!

There are signs that this is the final age and the end of the dharma age. Evil customs have arisen. Priests and house-holders are making themselves see and hear that any plan they start for

Then somebody may perhaps ask me, 'When you speak about this teaching, what actual form of the teaching are you thinking of? Is it the Four Doctrines about Paradise? Or is it the doctrine about the Five Ranks² of Disciples of the Lotus Law Sutra?' My answer is, No! It is not that sort of thing. What I wish to emphasize is that portion of the Lotus Sutra which deals with accommodated truth, where it tells us that the beginning of (advance to) Buddhahood is the way of knowledge of the truth, and that is why the Bodhisattvas make their appearance in this world of ours. They appear here—that is the main point. All the Tathagatas who have entered this world have expounded the inestimable and eternal law, and in every case their purpose has been to open up the understanding of all sentient beings in knowledge of the Buddha. If, therefore, any sentient being in this world gives up the hope of obtaining Buddha knowledge, it will not make any difference to him what law he practises—for there will then be no possibility of being united with the real purpose of the Buddha. The beginning of this Buddha knowledge is the discovery of the wondrous law of the one mind. But unfortunately, in this final world age, which is the age of dissolutions, this very law—the wondrous law of the one mind, is being discarded everywhere, and each individual is now thinking just as he individually wishes to think. Sometimes it seems as if the real desire to know the truth is there—almost as it were by chance, but it soon turns out to be nothing but a sort of philosophical discussion or an elegant fashion of talk—and it is not worth thinking about such talk at all.

In the Maha-Vairocana Bhissambodhi Sutra (Dainichi Sutra) it says, 'For the absolute truth one must know one's own self'—but no one today pays any attention to that.

When men do not follow the law of the Lotus Sutra and do not know where is the wondrous Law, but wander about saying it is in the west or it is in the east and spend their days in great agitation talking about this or that being the Buddha Way—they may be compared to the sons in the following allegory.

Once there was a very rich man who had obtained a limitless estate of land and fields, after experiencing a great deal of hardship and difficulty. This man one day, said to his sons, 'You go now and become rich like me,' and then he distributed his excess property without any favouritism to them all. But the sons did not follow in their father's ways. They went wandering off into

throw them away and put on some old sacking We are poor people with no one to make our complaints to We wander about without anywhere to stand or sit So we just go on weeping and weeping and praying for someone to pity us We have no words to express (our feelings) to those in this world who are compassionate'

People who think like that have made themselves poor and pass through life in an impoverished state, in spite of the advantages they have They can only be considered as being in a desperate state Runzai Taishi criticized such men when he said, 'Self indulgent men become men of low class' They are like fish which swim in the water but grumble that they cannot see what the water looks like! or they are like birds, which fly about in the air but grumble because they have not found any method for seeing what the air looks like! People like that are just plainly ignorant that throughout all the ten regions of the universe there is no place where the Absolute is not, nor that there is no sentient being which does not possess the Wondrous Law nature I cannot help being sorry for those who, while walking in the very midst of the one wondrous law and the pure land²¹ of calm and light, have become one-sidedly attached to this transient world during their life here, and because they delude themselves into thinking that there are crowds of sentient beings and that there is a hell after this life so that they have to weep and worry on account of their belief that that hell is infinite And therefore they cast away their hopes, thinking that those hopes are unreasonable and that the wondrous Buddha heart is unattainable—even though it is flowing before their very eyes That absolute which never ceases to be clear and bright behind and before them! And all this distress comes to pass because they pass their lives vainly, relying on ideas that are mere illusions of the sense consciousness It is also a sad thing that though there is that sutra of the wondrous law, which provides a delightful taste of nirvana, and has no superior in this world yet, because there is no one who practises its teaching, it is placed with all sorts of secular books, in the shelves of the revolving library and allowed to crumble away there in the dark without being of any use or benefit to anyone And on that account people mistake hell for the pure land and the three evil hells for the six stages of sentient existence

down those oxen and horses right in front of his eyes he did not notice it because he was in such distress himself—until he at long last became the very first to open out the Buddha Way of knowledge? What was all that about? Does it mean that the Buddha Way was difficult in old times but has become easy in our times? Was it like roasting ivy beans or boiling millet—something very hard at first but soft afterwards? If today's ease is right, then yesterday's hardness was wrong. But if yesterday's hardness was right, then today's ease is wrong. The bitter taste of ancient days was a very bitter taste. Nevertheless the Buddha had only turned the wheel of the law for a very little time when things began to happen—the lightning struck, the stars fell, saints and patriarchs began to appear. He had but to pass through a place for such things to come to pass! But if today's ease is commendable it is very easy! It is as easy as just looking at the portraits of wise men, or saints, or priests. Nevertheless when people turn the wheel today the captured fish stays still behind the bamboo fish-net, the injured tortoise stays lying on its back just as it was before. 'The one-eyed mule climbs up into the frozen corner of the rice fields' just as it did before—even when you pass by.

Which will you have?—today's ease or yesterday's hardness? And do not talk about this being the last age of the universe—for the ancients knew as well as we do that in the final age both the dhyana teaching and the correct doctrine would perish from the world. It has often been said that it is a cause of grief that men should look for the Wondrous Law as if they could find it on discoloured paper, or that they should attach the true teaching to mere verbal argumentation. If this important matter could really have been accomplished by putting it down on pieces of paper or handing it down in traditions then the mystic light would never have been shut off, nor would the feet of mystery have been injured. The head of the law body, the dharmakaya, would never have swelled, nor would the light of the law have had to shed tears. If men would make up their minds determinedly and definitely to recite the sacred formula ceaselessly by day and night so that they might continuously have the vision of the real Law Blossom (in their hearts), then there would be no need for anyone to go away into the snowy Himalaya mountains nor would they have to let their heads swell, for the

foreign countries. Some became beggars, standing at people's doorways. Some said they were mirror polishers and they carried polishing stones about with them. Some said they would drive off birds which ate the millet grains in the fields. Others boasted about being the sons of a millionaire, forgetting about their own beggar like appearance and they treated other people with contempt. Still others did nothing but turn over the leaves of their ledgers, but had no notion what their own property or fields looked like. And there were some amongst them who said that as long as they had their account books with them there was nothing for them to fear, so they did anything that came into their minds, no matter how evil it might be. Some again said that they knew the correct manners of the rich, and even while they were starving and dying of thirst they carried on those rich people's manners! Some who knew nothing about their properties did nothing but shout out about them by day and night, and still others who perhaps realized just a little about the great value of their lands, thereupon became proud and started lives of dissipation. So there was not a single one of those sons who conformed to the father's will.

In this little story, the land and property represent the wondrous law of the one mind. The account books and ledgers represent the sutras. Those who went about begging at people's doorways are those who go and listen to the teaching of various people—though the great business of learning to know how to approach Buddhahood is of course to know one's self even if that entails suffering and patience, in cold and heat—so these men only learn things which have no real substance in them and yet they say that they have attained to enlightenment. People like that are the foolish persons mentioned in the Lotus Sutra, are they not? Why! in the Mahayana scriptures even men who are holy men and have attained to the four results are spoken of as ordinary men of the two vehicles. If attainment is such a simple and plain thing as people say it is nowadays—not bound up with ropes and vines—then why did the Buddha go and shut himself up in those snowy Himalaya mountains for six years and discipline his body till he was nothing but skin and bones, so emaciated that he was like a brick tied round with thread, his knees became as thin as reeds or rushes and his elbow bones pierced through his skin—and yet he was not conscious of his state of emaciation. And when the lightning struck

strength to get rid of this idea I need not mention here all the other teachers who have held the true doctrine on this matter. There has never been any Buddhist patriarch in all the three ages and in all the ten regions who has lacked this discernment—nor any sage or holy man—it is the ancient and unchangeable fundament of the teaching. And when I say 'Discernment' what I mean is perception of the dignity of the Law of the Lotus. If people do all sorts of things as if they were the Way of Buddha, but have not this hope (or ridding themselves of the idea of a 'soul'), they may be compared to a number of children scrambling on to a ship without any pilot, not knowing what country they want to go to, some rowing in one direction, others in another or opposite direction, pushing their oars in this way or that way merely in accordance with their own whims—yesterday rowing with the tide towards the east, today rowing with it towards the west—till in the end they will never be able to escape from the boundless ocean. But if a pilot, who knows the way, comes on board, sets the compass and fixes the course, they may reach the desired haven within one day. This pilot is the will to discern. The compass is the correct Law. The helm is the moral discipline of the will.

Unfortunately in this rowing of the boat into the harbour of the wondrous law, people insist upon rowing outward—always outwards—which means that they are always looking for the Buddha outside of themselves—or they look for a patriarch or for a nirvana or a pure land—their method is to look outwards (and not inwards into their own minds) and that is why the more they seek, the further off they get, the more they enquire the more distant it all seems.

The real seekers are not like that at all. They have discovered what the wondrous law really is in their own existence—so they do not seek for outward Buddha or for a patriarch. They do not think that the wondrous law is inside or outside or in between whether it is green, yellow, red or white, and they persevere till they have assuredly had the vision of it once. So they boldly and courageously never cease, by day or night whether they are standing or sitting, sleeping or waking—they never give up till they have accomplished their purpose forcing their spirit ever on—(maintaining the correct spirit of meditation). Day and night they diligently investigate sometimes going over the problems again and again so as to perceive what

blossom of the essential wondrous law would open out for them to see

What is really essential for us to do, is to decide never to put aside our purpose until we see the vision of the wondrous law in our own minds. But we shall not receive anything more precious than we hope for. Even the world revered one, the Tathagata, before he saw the vision of the wondrous law in his own mind, was no different from any of us ordinary mortals—revolving round the wheel and continually descending (as well as ascending). He was born, he died, he came, he went. But after he had seen the vision of the wondrous law in his own mind when he was up in those Himalaya mountains, he, for the first time (in all the cycle), completed the true enlightenment

(And now continuing with the explanation of our story) The sons who were polishing tiles and bricks represent those persons who recognize the non-discriminating knowledge of the eighth, or super-consciousness. They understand about the original dignity of the self, and think that, provided they have no illusions, then they have attained already to the Buddha heart, which is as clear as a mirror. But a mirror reflects all objects as they are—a crow appears black, a heron looks white, a willow is green and flowers are red—a mirror does not make any mistake of that sort. Nevertheless, from time to time one must wipe off carefully all the dust and dirt so that no slightest trace of them is left. All illusions must be swept away by day and night. These persons we are thinking of now, have to polish their tiles as carefully as birds picking up grains of millet. What they actually do, however, is called Recognizing that there is a soul—so there is no shining forth of light to brighten the hills and valleys. There was a good deal of this sort of thinking in ancient China, and the reason why the patriarch, Nan gaku went and sat in front of Baso's hermitage and polished a tile there, was that he wished to teach that disciple this lesson. In the sage, Cho sha's gatha, it says, "The reason why the man who is studying the Way does not recognize the truth is that he continues to acknowledge a soul. Such a man calls that which is the origin of the everlasting kalpas or ages of existence, of life and death—'the Original or Primeval Man'." It was for this reason that sages like Ji myo, Shin jo, So-kwo and Dai e and others grit their teeth and exerted the utmost limits of their

NOTES ON ORATE-GAMA

1. ORATE-GAMA

This strange name is said to have been chosen by Hakuin for this little book because he used always to have in front of him while he was writing a little kettle or pot for brewing his tea. The current widespread tradition is that he used why may perhaps be called a sort of 'slang' language, (Ora for 'my' and Te for 'hand' and kettle—just meaning 'my kettle')

The other suggestion is that the ideograms for O Ra Te were embossed on the kettle (gama) The somewhat slang usage might well have been used for what have been called his sermons to his parishioners, but they are much less suitable in a book intended for well educated readers—a Lord, a monk and a nun

Perhaps Hakuin chose the ideograms because they do have some mystic associations

The ideogram for 'O' is pronounced En in ordinary Japanese but 'On' by Buddhist monks It is used in Buddhist circles in connection with fifteenth and other anniversary 'Requiem Masses'.

The ideogram for 'Ra' represents one of the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet and is said to signify Joy or Happiness

The ideogram 'Te' (Ten) is used for the Indian Gods It means 'Heaven'.

2. DARKNESS, SCATTERING

Kon is used of the darkness which comes after death It signifies the darkness of unenlightenment, in contrast to SAN, which signifies the 'Scattering' of the Skandhas or elements of existence when enlightenment is attained

3. SACRED PROCESSIONS

This means the performances of the correct discipline of Buddha's Way, or more specifically the special service, or ceremonial and ritual, performed on particularly important occasions, when the priests marched in procession round the Buddha seat, intoning the scriptures, and always walking from the right to the left Often a long and fatiguing task.

4. REALITY OF THE SELF NATURE

The ideograms mean Self and Nature As a technical term they refer to one of the twenty five entities which together create the phenomenal universe One of the 'TAI'. It includes Joy, Sorrow, and

the matter really is They must go on at all costs—for this is what we call 'The Law which bites into the Lion Man' But if one does not see the vision of the wondrous law in one's own mind—if one merely goes on asking what is the wondrous law—that is like what we call chasing Chinese dogs with clods of earth!

So, put aside everything else and become one who has no outside ideas while you repeat the sacred formula 'Namu Myo Ho Renge Kyo'—'Hail Wondrous Law of the Lotus Blossom Sutra'

If you still think that I have anything else that I can give you—some other teaching more acceptable about the law, you are making a grave mistake

'NAMU MYO HO RENGE KYO' 'NAMU MYO HORENGE KYO'

Dated this Fourth Year of Enkyo (1747), the Fourth Kalendar Sign (Hinoto) the Year of the Hare, the Twenty Fifth Day, Mid winter

You may, I am afraid, find the above long letter troublesome to read but if you read it out to the people in your hermitage, that will be a meritorious work. At least—it is with that wish that I have written this letter. It may, by good fortune, help you to see the vision of the wondrous law in your own heart—so go on constantly repeating your own sacred formula—that is my heart's desire for you

(25th, Mid winter Day of the Hare Fourth Sign Era of Entei)

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THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

Silence 卍 *SHO* is activated by the spiritual entity whereby all the differentiated phenomena of the universe appear

5 The FIVE DELUSIONS appear to mean delusions caused by the five bodily senses

6 THE TEN BONDS

Various attitudes of mind which prevent progress to Nirvana A grudging spirit, deceitfulness, envy and false views, etc

7 The EIGHT FALSE VIEWS apparently refer to the traditional false or non Buddhist teachings which were in vogue in Sakyamuni's time

8 THREE REALITIES

TAI signifies reality as contrasted with illusion There are three realities within the total universe There is the reality called the VOID There is the reality called the TEMPORARY REALITY or *KE*, and there is the MIDDLE reality—the inner (*CHU*) These three realities are connected with the activity of meditation

Void meditation is self explanatory

Temporary reality meditation perceives no actual reality but sees that there is an obvious distinction of form or colour

Inner reality meditation perceives that all the elements neither exist nor non-exist They are at the same time void and existent

The absolute the phenomenal and the assumed realities

9 THE TWO VOIDS

The SELF is void and all Dharmas are void They are called NINE KU or GA KU and HO-KKU

Other technical terms for the same ideas are TAN KU and FU TAN KU or SHO KU and SO-KU

10 THREE HELLS

The hell of fire (*Kwa zu*) the hell of blood (*Ketsu zu*) and the hell of the hungry demons

11 YURA

The Priest *IP PEN* is said to have 'Handed on the Lamp of the Law' (*TEN DO*) He belonged to a sub-sect of Zen called the HO-TO-HA Lamp of the Law sect It is also called the YURA MONTO sect It was founded by a priest named *EMMYO Kokushi* who lived at Yura

12. SUDDEN IGNORANCE

This is one of the three hindrances (WAKU) or HON NO. The three hindrances are (i) Error concerning the four noble truths, (ii) Ignorance concerning affairs and phenomena, (iii) Ignorance. This is the exact opposite of the state of real enlightenment. It is that activity of the mind which 'creates' or produces all the illusionary phenomena. It is the state of being 'unrelated to the Absolute'. When this state is 'made fragrant' or 'perfumed' by the absolute all the dharmas or elements of existence come into being. It is the primary source of all error doubt and illusion.

13. NAMES

One of the five dharmas or primary elements of existence. It is 'that which shows the entity' or nature of phenomena.

14. HINDRANCES

The activities of the mind which produce distress and confusion in mind and body. 'Ignorance' (above) is one of these. There are six of these, which are classified according to their objects. Some deal with objects and affairs, others deal with the Senses and the 'dusts'.

15. FOUR VIRTUES

The four virtues are attained by listening to the Law. (i) the great wisdom produced by hearing the true law, (ii) discerning the emptiness of reasoning concerning the four noble truths, (iii) separation from all hindrances or illusions, (iv) destruction of illusion and attainment of Nirvana.

16. CINTA MANI

One of the seven jewels. The MANI is the pearl—always clean and bright and shedding forth light. It is a symbol of the Buddha and his teaching (Cp OM MANI PADME UUM). It can produce wonderful treasures according to the will of whoever possesses it. It is held in the hands of the two handed Goddess of Mercy. It is kept safe in the Palace of MAKARA, the dragon king, under the sea. It is said to proceed out of the brain of this dragon king.

It is the jewel which is used by TAISHAKU TEN (Indra) in his battle with the devils

17. The LIGHT which shines from the mind and body of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas. It is the appearance of wisdom. It brightly illuminates all the common elements and all the teachings. It shines in all the ten regions of the universe breaking down illusions and ignorance.

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

It has two aspects or 'Rays' The 'MIND-LIGHT', and the 'COLOUR or FORM LIGHT' (called the BODY LIGHT) This latter has a constant glow and also a 'Free-Shining Flashing Light', which shines in the present rather than in the past

18 WISDOM EYE which sees that all the dharmas are in reality 'void

By means of this eye the sramanas or beginners cease from attachment to the differentiations of the phenomenal universe.

It is one of the 'FIVE EYES' The eye of the flesh the eye of heaven, the eye of the law, the eye of wisdom, the eye of the Buddha

19 THE SIX REGIONS or lands to which all sentient beings are, by their acts, directing their own way They are hell, land of hungry demons land of fierce devils who fight against the law; the land of man and the land of the gods or heaven

20 AVICI HELL

It is so called because there is no respite there (muken) from pain (mu means not, ken means time or space) Those who fall into this hell are those who have committed one of the five 'Gyaku Zai' or 'opposing crimes' These are patricide, matricide killing of arhats causing strife amongst priests; injuring Buddha's body

(Mahayana places patri and matri-cide as one crime and adds as fifth crime 'causing hindrance to those who are performing acts of repentance in accordance with the duties of the disciples who have finished their novitiate

21 THE SIX SIDED TEMPLE, said to have been built by Shotoku Taishi.

Later it became the headquarters of the famous Ike-no Bo Flower Arrangement School It contains the mausoleum of Tada Manju

22 THE FIVE SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT into which the first generation of the Buddha's teachings were separated—beginning with the 'shallow' and advancing to the 'deep' (This is the explanation of this term GO-HA (FIVE SECTS) given by HO ZO, the founder of the Keron sect (642-712) (The sect based on the Maha Vaipulya Buddha Avatamsaka Sutra) The five sects are (i) the Hinayana, (ii) beginning teachings of the Mahayana (iii) the end teaching of the Mahayana (Lokavantara Sutra) (iv) the sudden teaching of the Mahayana and (v) the Keron teaching (as above)

23. SEVEN CURRENTS OF ILLUSION

So called because the current makes sentient beings 'wander' or be carried by currents over the sea of illusion.

Seven methods for bringing these currents to an end were devised by the sages of old.

(i) causing desire to cease; (ii) causing illusion of thought to cease; (iii) perception of the four noble truths; (iv) perception of the emptiness of all the dharmas of existence, (v) perception that the mind is 'void'; (vi) protection from any recurrence of the habit of sense or thought; (vii) final prevention of any such recurrence.

24. SEVEN PIECED ROBES NINE FOLDED STOLES

The three robes worn by priests. These three robes are (i) the large robe called Sokari. (ii) The Shichi jo—a robe of seven widths joined crossways. One width is divided into three and joined vertically, two being long and one short. This is worn on top. It used to be worn by Indian priests in ancient times when they entered villages. Now used by all sects. (iii) The 'An da e', or Go jo—an under garment. The KU JO or Nine Widths (or eleven up to thirty five widths. The greater the number of widths the better the robe). Used by priests when preaching or alms collecting. Reached from the shoulders to the knees and was fastened round the waist.

The other chief robe is the Kesa which is the distinctly clerical, as distinct from the layman's dress. The stole or surplice.

25. MOUNT SUMERU

The central mountain of every universe. It rises out of the ocean. Its sides are of gold, silver, lapis lazuli and glass. It is covered with fragrant shrubs.

26. THE EIGHT UPSETS OR OVERTURNINGS

The four kinds of views which upset correct reasoning and the four false views still believed in by Sravakas and Pratyeka Buddhas.

(i) The first four are held by ordinary householders. They are: the view that inconstant things are constant, that non-pleasure is pleasure, that what is a non-self is a self, that impure things are pure.

(ii) The second set of four are held by monks of the two lower orders. They are: that the constant reality of Nirvana is not constant; that pleasure is not pleasure, that the self is a non-self; that purity is not purity.

27. THE FOUR KINGS, who protect the Buddha's Law.

They are: JIKOKU, ZOCHO, KOMOKU and TAMON BISHAMON.

They dwell in one of the six heavens of desire Their heaven is half way to the top of MOUNT SUMERU
 JIKOKU'S heaven is on the east, ZOCHO'S is on the south, KOMOKU'S on the west, and TAMON'S on the north
 These four kings serve under Taishaku—Ten (Indra) and have under them eight gods Their duty is to protect all who are converted to Buddha's Way

28 TO-RI

The second of the six heavens of the world of desire It is the heaven of Indra, and is situated between the four peaks of Mt Sumeru It has thirty two cities of 'devas', eight on each corner In the centre is Indra's own city, where he reigns, having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and four arms The thirty two cities represent classes of inhabitants

29 YAMA

God of the dead and the living dwelling in a heaven above the world Here, happiness is the subject of song intermittently
 This is the third of the six heavens of the world of desire It is also one of the four heavens of the VOID Sometimes YAMA and his sister are said to 'divide' the duties Hence it is called a 'Heaven of Time Division' The sister controlled the women there
 Or the 'division' is so called because there is a divided lot—sometimes a happy and sometimes a sad lot—pleasure and pain succeed each other

YAMA was once a Vaisali king who said he wished to be king of hell Hence he and his eighteen officials and eighty thousand of his soldiers were reborn in hell

Three times every day the throats of all of them, including Yama are filled with boiling copper This is the painful 'lot' of this hell

30 THE EIGHT VOICES OF THE BUDDHA

These are pleasant, fear producing, respectful, merciful, sincere, deep, soft, inexhaustible

31 THE SALA TREE (*Schorea Robusta* or Teak Tree)

It is called 'Firm, hard, victorious', because it grows tall and over shadows other trees in the forest Sakyamuni's conception and birth took place under a Sala tree

32 ONE WHO HAS NOT YET BECOME A BUDDHA

(1) One who cannot become a Buddha by breaking the primary karma

- (ii) One who cannot easily become a Buddha, but by the Buddha's power may eventually do so
- (iii) One who having the merciful heart of a Bodhisattva, refrains from his own will, from entering Nirvana, in order to be able to help others to enter there

33 PILGRIM WAY

The word is used of travelling Bikkhus. By regulation, the monk, when travelling must use a 'pilgrim's staff'—so the word 'HISHAKU' or STAFF came to be used of the travelling of a Buddha priest, as here

34 THREE STAGES TO NIRVANA

The three innumerable ages—the time taken by a Bodhisattva in his study and meditative discipline till he attains to buddha hood or Nirvana

The first of these stages or ages begins with the lowest grade or degree of discipleship, the first of the ten residential stages or grades, and continues till the disciple is ready and able to pass on his merits to others. The second stage is the first ground which continues to the tenth ground. These stages are called 'grounds' because the Bodhisattvas in these stages have attained to that state of wisdom which 'grows like the trees and flowers out of the ground', i.e. without having to move but by self reliance alone.

The third stage begins with the eighth 'ground' and goes on to the tenth 'ground'. Here the Bodhisattvas wait to enter Nirvana.

In the first stage, whose years are innumerable, there are seventy five thousand Buddhas to be worshipped. In the second stage there are *seventy six thousand* and in the third stage there are *seventy seven thousand*.

During these three stages all the works which will produce Buddha hood are fulfilled.

35 DHARANI

The magic formulas which prevent good dharmas or elements from being lost, prevent the duties of infinity from being scattered, and which take away the evil dharmas from sentient beings and provide them with good dharmas.

The name is also used for titles and scriptures which provide such merits for sentient beings.

In the YOGACARYA SUTRA four kinds of dharani are named.

In the MAHA PRAJNA PARAMITA SUTRA three kinds are named.

36 THE THREE MYSTERIES

One is seen in the very nature of the body, one is seen in the word, and one by the mind or will Or alternatively, one is of the hands, one of the mouth, and one of the will, or again one is the mystery of the Buddha, one is that of the will and one is of the Bodhisattva)

37 THE THREE SUTRAS

The three sections of the SADDHARMA PUNDARIKA or Law of the Lotus Sutra (Called Muryogi kyo, Hokke kyo and Kwan Buken kyo) Or the three sections of the Vairocana sutras or the three pure land sutras Or the three sections of the scriptures concerning the defence of the country (Chin Go-Koku Ron)

38 SACRED BOOKS (Used by the Ritsu Sect)

The five sacred books are

- (i) Binimo kyo
- (ii) Zenken Ron
- (iii) Myoryo-Ron
- (iv) Mu toku Koku Ka Ron
- (v) Sabbata Ron

39 THE SEVEN SECTS of Buddhism

viz Risshu Hossoshu, Sanronshu, Kegonshu, Tendaishu Shin gonshu and Zenshu (In Zen views the seven sects are the five mentioned in note 22 above, to which are added the Koryu and Yoku sub sects of Zen)

40 TEMPLE PATRONS

So named from the Sanskrit word DANA, which means ALMS OR CHARITY The first of the Paramitas (Roku-do) or means for passing over to the 'other shore' Alms giving parishioners or SESHU are the persons who are expected to 'do alms, i.e. to give alms to the begging monks who come from their own temple The Seshu are the Danapati of Sanskrit, the 'parishioners' who gain merit by doing alms This is now a title of honour for members of temples. Other terms used for this class of laity are Dankotsu and Danku

41 WHITE ROBED LAITY

Used metaphorically for the laity, who were supposed to dress in white, in contrast with the clergy, whose dress was black

42 THE SEVEN TREASURES are

Gold, silver, emerald pearl, sphatika, crystal ruby and agate—or coral, amber, cinta mani (see note 16) sphatika, chakra, agate,

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

diamond (NB Chakra is the symbol of the King who turns the wheel) The power of the Chakra king is shown by the quality of the metal out of which his symbolic disk is made.

43. THE TEN WORLDS or Grades of Illusion and Enlightenment
They are hell, hungry devils, beasts, asuras (demons), men (These are the six worlds of illusion) Sramanas, Pratyeka Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas (These are the four worlds of enlightenment)

44 QUICK, SUDDEN, GRADUAL

This phrase occurs first in the Lankavatara Sutra, but is interpreted differently in different sects

Some, like the Kegon, enter Mahayana at once (quick), some have to come to Mahayana through Hinayana (slow), such as the Hokke or Nehan sects

However in the Tendai schools, the teaching given by the Buddha for the sake of the Bodhisattvas is the quick (or TON), the teaching for those who need Hinayana first is slow, e.g. the Hannya or Prajna teaching (Zen—the ideogram differs from the one used for the Zen teaching)

Sometimes TON means teaching requiring no words, when words are needed it is ZEN

Or TON is by belief in Amida Buddha, and ZEN is other Sutra teaching

TON means QUICK and ZEN means SLOW or GRADUAL

45 SECRET

The teaching given by Buddha by his mystic or magic powers. The crowds who were listening heard but one sound of his voice, but it meant something different to each listener according to his capacity to understand

46 ONE MIND

This refers to the SHINNYO or unchanging reality or substance underlying the nature of all sentient beings. The 'One' refers to their all being 'equal', the 'Mind' refers to the reality, or to the intelligence, heart, or knowledge of all sentient beings, or alternatively to 'Concentration of mind'—i.e. no distraction of thought especially in thinking of Amida Buddha—not thinking of any other Buddha than Amida

The term also signifies the identifying of the Mind of the sentient being with the Mind of the Buddha

47 FUNDAMENTAL NON BIRTH HON FUSHO

One of the technical terms connected with the doctrine of the Adi Buddha. It refers to the implication of the idea of origin in the Sanskrit word ADI, of which the syllable 'A' is the beginning. This syllable 'A' is one of the 'rhythmic' sounds of which there are twelve in the Sanskrit alphabet. It is also one of the forty two 'Door letters', and it is called the 'foundation' of all words and the 'mother' of all letters.

When one hears this syllable it gives rise to the ideas of all kinds of words of which it is the 'head', and it has always had all kinds of meanings.

HON refers then to the 'Origin' or beginning of things. It refers to this syllable 'A' of mystic implications.

FUSHO signifies 'NO BIRTH' and the whole phrase means that there is no beginning or origin of the fundamental birth of things.

It is connected with the term 'SHO FUSHO' or FIRST NO-BIRTH—the beginning of infinitesimals from which 'Form' and 'Colour' are produced.

As soon as a Bodhisattva enters the 'School' of the 'A' (Negation) or hears the syllable 'A', then by following on the meaning of that sound he realizes the 'Non Birth' of all the dharmas or elements. In the Shingon sect (of which this is part of the mystic teaching, this 'A' is called the 'Seed' of Vairocana (Dainichi Nyorai) whose symbol is the sun's disk. Four different tones are given to this syllable, and each sound or tone represents a special aspect of the Buddha's doctrine.

(i) The developing Buddha heart (becoming a disciple); (ii) the disciplined life; (iii) bodhi or knowledge, (iv) nirvana.

When all these grades have been accomplished then the ranks of Asendai, Hosen, Mida and Shaka are found to be identical with Vairocana Himself, in virtue of the Vows taken by that Buddha.

48 NON-ORIGINATED

That which is not the effect of any cause. That which is constant from eternity. Not created by any dharma. Its opposite is U I (the phenonemal world).

49 THE THREE SCHOOLS

Said to have been given by Buddha in three stages of his work, i.e. Hinayana (for sramanas, the self is still believed in); the Paramita Prajna teaching for those ready to accept Mahayana—all dharmas are known now to be void and the middle teaching when neither void nor existence is asserted. Alternatively, the three teachings are

(i) Gradual, sudden and perfect (Zen Ton and En)

- (ii) Teaching of 'Form', 'Non Form' and 'Eternity'.
- (iii) The teaching of three different ages in China.
- (iv) Teaching that substance is void, Form is void, and the perfection of consciousness.

50 THE GREAT MIRROR

When all mental activities up from MUMYO or ignorance are brushed away was anything left? The mental activities are likened to dust which has settled in a Mirror. They are the six dusts, or the ten sleeps, or the five heretical opinions or the five aggregations of dharma elements. They conceal the surface of the mirror. When wiped off then the true wisdom is seen—the wisdom which does not cause return to the wheel of life. This real wisdom perceives the dharma elements for what they are. Just as all objects are reflected in a mirror, so all the dharmas are reflected in this 'Mirror-Wisdom', which is the first wisdom attained on enlightenment. Therefore this wisdom is called the 'GREAT ROUND OR PERFECT MIRROR'. When this mirror is looked into, what is seen cannot be expressed by words, explained by teachers, written in sutras or shown by symbols.

51. PURE LAND OF CALM

The UNIVERSE as seen by those who have attained to enlightenment. To such, this universe is a pure land where there is no defilement, and all differences are harmonized, where eternal calm is united with wisdom and benevolence. In other words it is the universe as seen by the Buddha

52. FIVE RANKS OF DISCIPLES mentioned in the HOSHI section of the Lotus Sutra.

- (i) Those who receive and memorize the Law (called Juji Hoshi)
- (ii) Those who see and read the Law or Sutra (called Dokkyo Hoshi)
- (iii) Those who do not see but repeat the Sutra by heart (called Tsukyo Hoshi)
- (iv) Those who expound the sacred text (called Kaisetsu Hoshi).
- (v) Those who copy out the Sutra (called Shosha Hoshi)

Sermons to his Peasant Parishioners

A WAYSIDE SERMON

THE AWAKENING FROM DAYDREAMING

THE PLAIN-LOOKING COURTESAN'S BALLAD OF BRAVADO

THE CALM MIND BEATING OUT THE DUST OF PRIDE

THE DRUM MINSTREL'S SONG OF THE GREAT WAY

THE LAY OF THE OLD LADY HEART-CONTROL

A SONG OF ALMSGIVING

SONGS IN PRAISE OF MEDITATION

NOTES

I

TSUJI DANGI

A WAYSIDE SERMON

THE sun of absolute¹ reality enlightens the darkness of the long night of life and death. The moon of Primary²-Buddha-Nature drives away the clouds of ignorance and illusion. For all brave sentient beings this is accomplished by the One realization of Buddha-hood-attainment. But for indolent sentient beings it is necessary to pass through the three ages to Nirvana.

Well! I am very glad to see such numbers of you here today. All of you seem to have come together of your own accord. This is most praiseworthy in times such as these. I don't need to tell you that these are terribly important times. Sentient things are pressing each other on their journey back to what was their former home—the three hells. One can see them before one's very eyes being pushed down into those terrible places, the hells of weeping and wailing, of burning heat, the hell of the black rope, the cold (Padma) hell, the seventh cold hell and the great (Padma) hell, where they will have to undergo the pains of unmeasured suffering.

But I spoke just now of the sun of absolute reality enlightening the darkness of the long night of ignorance and illusion. This is a teaching which comes to us in two-fold form, for it occurs in the records of our own imperial court! When, once in olden times, the divine will was revealed to an imperial messenger at the inner shrine of Ise, Amaterasu no Omi-kami most graciously replied in an oracle which gave a quotation from the beginning of one of the ancient Buddhist sutras—viz. Zendo's Kwan-kyo³ (613-681 A.D.). This makes us realize that there is nothing but the difference of the trough and crest of a water wave between what we call Gods and what we call Buddhas.

Now, the Tathagata, who controls the ten⁴ powers of Buddha-hood, resides entirely within the minds of all sentient beings

who intrepidly repeat that prayer of the one realization of Buddhahood attainment.

Unfortunately other sentient beings, not so intrepid, but negligent and indolent, must, as has been said, pass through the three stages to Nirvana.

What then? This immediate attainment of Buddhahood by the one realization is entirely the exertion of one moment's absolute energy.

And who and what are the other sentient beings? They are beings, like you and me, who have attained to the stage of existing in a human body, which is so hard to come by in the course of the cycle of ages, and have looked upon the law of the Buddha, which again is so hard to discover or come by in that same course of ages. But they look upon this law as if they were in a dream. They feel as if they were going to live for a thousand years. They eat what they want to eat, they drink what they want to drink, they sleep when they want to sleep, they play when they want to play, and their perception of the Buddha wisdom is as small as a rape seed! They become angry over a quart affair as if it were a three gallon affair. They worry over a sen affair as if it were a yen affair. Their whole body, right through to their inner organs and their very bowels, is filled with the three poisons^a and the five lusts. There is nothing but avance, covetousness, anger and wrath! Every day they commit the ten evils, the three sins of the body, the four sins of the mouth, and they pile them up to carry with them as they go on towards the land of darkness.

When these people die, at first they do not have a proper body, and it is as if they had entered into a deep sleep. But after a little while their 'root nature' becomes fixed, and then they open their eyes and find that they have fallen into the city of darkness. They begin to notice the mountain of 'After Death' and the valley of the three hells. Then they have to grope their way for ten or twenty miles till they come out onto a broad, limitless plain, where there is no sun or moon but only great conflagrations burning with the flames flaring up to the sky. Here they see sinners crowded together weeping bitterly. And the new-comers think, 'Alas, have we sunk down to this dreadful place? Oh, if only we had known about this . . . but we thought all the talk about this sort of thing was the idle talk of men of false views. And nobody had ever come back to tell

4 PORTRAIT OF
HIMSELF

By courtesy of the Abbot
Shoin Temple Shizuoka

室曆第六百五十八年誕生

法華抄二百五十八年誕生

生後安住手越村

後有南浦紹明主

持經來山左無遠張怒

傳來二十世後門

玄濟北十八世孫

東海日多孫羅社

余却超宗峯騰魂

竊偷愚虛堂家產



us about it, so we concluded that there was no such place. But in any case, we have not committed murder or any great crimes sufficient to drag us into these hells . . . Unfortunately men of high degree and of low degree, famous as well as unknown people, who had no true discrimination of the truth but were like horses and cattle in their earthly lives, have to go groping their way through the darkness to these hells, from which there is no return, as the sages of old have always warned us. And the old sages advised us over and over again to practise recollection of the Buddha.

Was it not the Emperor Enki (Taigo 899-930 A.D.) who played a flute and sang a song about Nichizō Shōnin of the Cave? (A Shingon priest, 884-935 A.D.?) He sang that there is no movement of time, no class or caste or sudra there. No palace or hovel, no feudal lord or court noble, no ordinary man or famous man, all are in the same case. Here may be seen monks, sramanas, tonsured priests, square robed nuns as well as men and women of the world, all gathered in the fourth hot hell and the hell of the black rope. And the Emperor even saw purple-robed priests of the imperial court, red-robed abbots, acharias⁸ of great learning, teachers of great knowledge and all sorts of honourable people. All being beaten by the terrible wardens of hell.

In this world of ours many people living in circumstances similar to our own are taught about the pure land and about the prayer of recollection of Buddha, and they begin to think that these are blessings which will be given to them without any special desert on their part. Make up your minds that such high hopes are futile. There is no such thing as being born automatically as a Buddha in the pure land. Nothing comes to us but what we have deserved. That is why we must not be careless in these matters. We should desire fervently some way of succour, even if we have to risk our very lives for it. Those in hell . . . feel a deep resentment against those who in this transient world taught them with so little enlightened knowledge. . . . It is evident that these teachers who are found down in the hells are there because they themselves did not have the necessary enlightened knowledge.

And now, you and I during these earthly lives of ours should remember what is going to happen . . . It is all taught in the Fifteen Sections of the Forest of Pearls in the Maha-Shi-kwan

Sutra. There we are told not to be careless. Take that advice. Good medicine is bitter to the taste. Good advice is hard to accept. And do not think that there is some mistake in this advice. It is indeed an opportunity, for which one should be grateful when by some good chance one comes to hear a lecturer or attends a meeting and hears the unique and correct teaching. Unfortunately in this latter age men listen only to stories about the pure land told by cheap and unauthorized priests of low degree . . . and so they do not know about self-discipline and their ignorance is greater than that of new born babies . . .

It is not only you and I who are present at this meeting who by the help of the sutras may become Buddhas. Everybody living in the sixty provinces of this land of Fuso from the mountainous regions of Hida to the districts of Hakata in Chikushi and the Bay of Tsugaru, in town and country alike, all, all may become Buddhas by virtue of their Buddha nature . . .

And I wish to warn you that it is a mistake to think, as so many do, that it is merely by repeating the one formula of the name of Amida that all sins are instantly destroyed, and that therefore, no matter how many sins one may commit it is easy to wash them away or that no matter how much dissipation one engages in it is easy to become a Buddha. If you do make that mistake there will be a sad and sudden awakening as from a dream.

What, then, can we do to escape from these evil places? Is there anything that we can rely on to destroy the obstacles of evil which seem so endless and began even before this life? Now, just as when a father tells his sons that they must work assiduously lest poverty come upon them, and at the same time gives them the necessary materials and tools for their work . . . so, too, when our teacher tells us not to be negligent but strenuous so he, too, at the same time gives us the materials and tools by which we may do what we ought to do. He has provided the Way . . . By following this Way we may heap up immeasurable treasures of 'Law-Property' . . . reverencing and believing in the three treasures, the Buddha, the Law and the Order . . .

Unfortunately the monks and sramanas of this latter age are not like that. They are more like blind men standing by while an infant is crawling on towards an open pit, into which it will fall if it is not warned or helped. Being blind themselves they do not see the infant getting near the dangerous pit. True priests

of real benevolence and mercy will give warning. They tell us that it is good to enquire, to be prepared and not to be negligent in our duties of the Way. They do not just stand by and say: 'Oh, how dangerous, the infant will surely fall into that pit. Rather do they provide an *'Elixir of life and immortality'* the means of attaining instantaneously to Buddhahood.

I myself will not hesitate to hand on the knowledge of how to make up the *elixir prescription*. All of you here give me your full attention.

You have bodies of about five feet in height, amongst you are men and women, priests, youths, old people, men of high and low rank, some are good looking, some not so good looking, each differing from the other. But here amongst us all there blow mists and winds of love and hatred, jealousy, avarice, be grudging spirits—all these bubble up, boil over, rise and fall like the waves of the sea. The three poisons overflow into our bosoms, the five lusts congeal in our breasts, and every day evil habits pile up revolving towards the three hells.

If you want to by pass those three hells and get beyond those eight horrible places, and enter directly into the land of the Tathagata and safely reach that other shore, Nirvana, then first of all be careful to make your minds calm, discipline your hearts, and examine yourselves to see if your *'elixir making vessel'* is working correctly. In this matter there is no difference between man and woman, priest and layman, poor and rich, good or bad looking people. For this is that uttermost and final way, spoken of by O sei Shi—dark and silent. But cast the light of your intellect on it, don't be negligent about it day or night, and you will find that illusionary dreams perish, thought ceases, one throws down and smashes to pieces the *'Board of Jade'*, one knocks over the *'Palace of Ice'*, and prepares to lose both body and self at the same time. Then one can advance, without retreat, and suddenly one will find that he has pierced through to the truth, and he will realize that there is no *'ten-direction space'*, nor any single inch of the great earth. Everything, the coarse and the fine, the outer and the inner, will be merged in the infinite.

This is what Ei Hui (Dogen 1200-1253 A.D.) called the *'sloughing off of the body and mind'*. It is what the ancients called *'Reason coming to an end, words being exhausted, the extreme limit of knowledge'*. It is that good time when the

phoenix escapes from the golden net, and the stork escapes from its cage. It is what we call, in Zen, 'Listening to the voice of one hand', and 'seeing the palm of one's hand in broad daylight'. It is the time when one will be able to 'stir up the water of the river and turn it into syrup' and to change thorns and briars into forests of sandal wood,' or iron into gold. But the supreme god of man is better than all these things. For even if a man were to obtain all the wealth and honour of ten thousand feudal estates, that would be, in comparison with the supreme good, nothing but the emptiness of a half forgotten dream. And as has been said, 'Wealth is the property belonging to this earthly life alone, and when the body perishes it perishes along with it, but Wisdom is the treasure of the ten thousand ages and when this life ends Wisdom continues onward'.

Every single sentient being in this mortal world of ours, whatever his state, whether prince or commoner, old or young, priest or layman, man or woman—yes, even horses, cows, dogs, pigs, apes, monkeys, deer—there is not one single one of all these which has not been provided with the great property, viz the truly essential uncreated Buddha nature. To this is given the name 'Sun of Reality and True Purity', and 'Moon of Primary Buddha Nature'. If you lose this then you become an ordinary mortal sinking down the ever revolving wheel of existence to the pain filled regions of the hells. But if by a sudden flash of insight you attain to the perception of the Buddha nature then you instantly attain to the fullest enlightenment and become one of those incomparable ones of the three ages, like to Tathagata, who controls and exists in all the ten regions of the universe.

So I want to urge you now to listen to that wonderful, voiceless sound or voice of one hand—to hear 'the sound of the music of Non Existence echoing down the valley of the Utter Void'.

This is all I have to say to you today. Come again tomorrow and listen again. Retrieve your fortunes. Retrieve your fortunes!

II

SHINKOKU NO MEZAME

THE AWAKENING FROM DAY-DREAMING

(Abridged translation)

NOBODY likes ordinary, commonplace things And that is quite natural A good medicine is bitter to the taste, but it wakes us up It makes us open our eyes And waking up spoils our dreams

Everybody likes what is new, the novelty of things The world bridge which takes us across the floating transient world of ours so lightly is dangerous for the feet which walk over it And it is not sufficient to tell men to keep to the middle of the road The road is broad Open your eyes!

If you open your eyes, you will find that whatever enterprise you are undertaking on the stage of this life will appear in an entirely new light You will see the three¹⁰ thousand worlds all at one glance

Some time ago I felt a strong desire to go and see what the great city of Yedo, so prosperous and large, looks like Oh, what a great city it is It is indeed a great and flourishing city, but it is forsaking the Three ancient forms of the Buddha's teaching In one way this seemed to be quite opportune for me, for fortunately the new jewels which I wish to sell can be stored in a house rented in a back street, and I need only to wait for good prices

Come and buy Come and buy There is plenty put away in my chests If you like my wares just ask for them This is a wholesale jeweller whose treasures are priceless But buy them for yourselves

Everything under heaven seems to be in tangled confusion especially the things of this world Men must take the past and the future into their own hands and look at the truth They must try to see it with their own eyes—the false and the correct, the good and the evil

There are many self existences, Gods and Buddhas, and there are many teachings connected with the many deities. A thousand yen, ten thousand yen will not be sufficient for you.

The Confucian scholar and the Buddhist teacher are like seed. If you do not know which is the right seed it will bring forth nothing but leaves and branches—nothing but inessential things for you. And that is not surprising because our eyes and noses and all our senses are nothing but obstructions.

Men are apt to rely on their eyes, noses, ears, tongues, bodies, and for that very reason it is difficult for them to control their hearts. The heart, therefore, is left in darkness. A Confucian scholar makes literature his life's work. He picks up the dregs of the ancients. He thinks it well to compose poems but he scatters rhetorical flourishes up and down in his writings almost at haphazard, while all the time he has no idea what his master's face was like nor what were his master's intentions, which the master himself actually did carry out so well when it was a matter of goodness or of Heaven's will. What the scholar does now, however, is nothing more than giving help in a dream to a dream. In his lectures, which he sometimes delivers, he gives literal explanations out of the illusion of his own ideas of wisdom. When he lectures on that great saying of Confucius, '*Piercing through to everything from the One*', the lecturer speaks many words with his mouth but never will anything be heard from the clear vision of his heart.

Scholarship of this sort is nothing but an ear for seeking abstractions. Much learning and many arts lead merely to the delusions which are rank growing seeds of phantasy. Scholarship is nothing but this.

What is the originating source of joy, of anger, sorrow, pleasure in one's own heart? True scholarship is first of all the learning of how to use correctly one's eyes, nose, tongue, and body, and also how to use one's hands and feet for their proper work. When one reaches the true understanding of this, one is a self-existing being—a Buddha. Because when one has done that one's heart is subjugated, one's body is disciplined. One's home will then be properly regulated. It is this which is the foundation for the governing of the land and of the whole world. This is the true discipline and learning. So, everybody, please wake up. When you wake up, you are lord of heaven and earth. Right round the clock you will be used by the self-existence, the

Buddha, but if you do not realize this there will arise a 'Pride of Self', a sense of dissatisfaction, of folly. It is dangerous not to realize this.

Turn now and look at the Buddhist man's religious life. It seems to aim at cupidity and fame, because of the depth of its secular outlook. It takes interest in money matters and property. Some priests of low spiritual power conduct themselves even worse than do many secular persons. The Buddha's teaching has utterly fallen to the ground. Sakyamuni's real intentions are no longer understood. That 'Voice of One Hand' of our original father, those nine years of meditation while facing the wall by Daruma, yes, and even that smile" on the face of the Buddha with the plucked flower in his hand—one can hardly believe it—but all this has been entirely cast away as into the Western sea. The priests all try to keep in the good graces of their patrons and alms giving parishioners. They seldom look at the Buddhist teachings or the records of the patriarchs. All they do is just to lick up the dregs of the teachings of the ancients. And when they do occasionally preach and lecture, speaking as though the ideas had come out of their own hearts, their breasts are full of the three poisons and the five lusts so that they do nothing but scatter illusions and vain doctrines about in the world. They climb up onto their lecture seat with looks of triumph so as to fascinate and bedevil the men and women householders who come to hear them. Without any feelings of shame they have come to an agreement with their lusts which are so hard to suppress. This is a case of 'One blind man leading many to hell'.

So, everybody open your eyes. Wake up! Turn your hearts right over. Do not lose your way amongst the sense objects of this world. Polish the mirrors of your natural hearts, brighten them up. Don't follow the bad customs of these times. In these days there has grown up a custom amongst worldly people, who have no true wisdom, to exchange Gods for Buddhas and Buddhas for Gods, to use incantations, magic and long prayers. Some even go so far as to light fires for the purpose of making incantations and invocations, and as a result new illusions are apt to arise. And many people, suffering from some grief or disease go about asking different gods to help them. They ask, Is there some special Yakushi Nyorai, in some particular shrine who may be useful for my special sickness. Or what Jizō is there near here who may be good for these pains in

my stomach? Or perhaps there is some Kwannon who is good for headaches, or this particular Fudo is good for such and such things. Moreover they combine their worldly pleasures and needs with their religion just as if they were going to enjoy a flower show. When they make vows they do so with disordered hearts. Their world is the transient world where there is no end to the lusts. When they have possessions they desire still more. Even when they have more than they know what to do with they still feel that they have not got enough. They think that they can ask the gods and Buddhas for any unreasonable thing and that they will be given whatever their own lusts desire. (But surely if the Gods and Buddhas wished to do so the very trees and shrubs and the very earth itself would speak out for them.)

Everybody should know that Yakushi Nyorai is nothing other than a manifestation of that power which saves from pain, answering to the inward desire for healing which all sentient beings feel in this transient and illusionary world. And Jizō means simply that the depths of the mind are very deep indeed. They are, as it were 'stored in the ground' (NB The ideogram 地 means 'ground' and 蔵 means 'store', so this is a kind of pun on the name Jizō.) Moreover the outward form of Jizo's image is of gentle aspect, to show how good is the inner nature of the mind.

Kwannon, too, signifies simply the ideas of vision and hearing (Kwan is the ideogram for perception and 聞 is the ideogram for sound. Kwannon is the one who perceives and hears the sounds or prayers of all sentient beings.)

All these can be summarized in our Zen teaching about the voice or sound of one hand. If one understands the meaning of that then one is truly awake. And if one is truly awake then the whole world is a Kwannon.

And look at the image of Fudo, who is so much in the fashion today. His image is made so that it shall be a manifestation to all men of the five duties²² of life. The rope which hangs on his left arm symbolizes the tying up of the illusions of sentient beings in order that these illusions may not operate. The sword which he holds in his right hand shows that he cuts off all illusionary ideas of sentient beings. The flame which rises behind him is the symbol of the burning up of illusions. He is standing on the 'great earth', which shows that he is treading down all the illusions so that they may not rise up into the minds of

sentient beings. The pure water falling at his side is for the purpose of purifying away all the illusions. The aspect of his body is that of a fierce deity whose right eye looks up towards heaven, and whose left eye looks down towards the earth. He is standing like an awe-inspiring warrior. All this is an allegory telling men that they must not wander away in the senses of this illusionary and transient world.

Gods and Buddhas have in reality no form, and as they have no form they are unknown to those who dwell in the realm of the secular life. They have been given form because of our necessity. But do not rely on names and forms. If you do, that is an illusion. Not even the Buddhas of Embu-Dangon¹³ have any other origin than on this earth, which is nothing but an accumulation of impurities.

So, everybody, wake up!

When you wake up you will find that this whole world, above and below, is nothing other than a regarding of oneself. . . . Find out what your mind really is and open your eyes in true wakefulness. If you must worship Gods and Buddhas see that your hearts are pure and your body also. Be humble and have a calm mind with no vain thoughts or illusions in it. Then you will attain to the condition of 'Non-self'.¹⁴

That is a summary of this teaching. No matter how little sickness there may be in a man's body there is pain in his heart, because there is illusion in his mind. This is a chronic sickness of all sentient beings. It was to save us from this that our father in India sacrificed his own precious body, which cannot be too highly venerated, and walked about through the land barefooted helping people.

But if you do reach the condition of the 'Non-self' you must not therefore become foolish doers of evil. This 'Non-self' is nothing other than the stopping of one's own painfully narrow thinking, and the preserving of the heavenly and natural truth, which is called the eye of the teaching. The ordinary man is apt to be sunk deep in his self lusts, and that, of course, invites evils and disasters. Be thoroughly discriminating in this matter. When natural calamities befall us it is all right to pray to the Gods and Buddhas, but in that case the Gods and Buddhas are only the targets of our prayers. Do not let your minds be taken captive by the target. Keep your body firm and do not let your thoughts be absorbed by anything. Let your mind be calm, and

fix your attention quietly and clearly, and then the arrow which you shoot will never miss its mark. But if your mind is distracted even a target which is only five feet away may be missed. What is important is to hit the target and it does not matter much what the target is—it may be merely a sardine or it may be a target of gold. Be sure in your own mind about this.

Takama-ga hara 'the Shinto Land of the Gods', is 'My own Mind'. The pure land of Amida is my own mind. Every pure place is a place where the Gods and Buddhas dwell. So be sure not to have an evil spot in your mind. Hatred, ill will and such things are the 'stock funds' of hell. They are the seed of the five lusts of illusion and of impurity. When there is illusion the mind becomes clouded and does not know the truth. Perplexities then arise and because of these perplexities great loss occurs. Such a state of affairs in the mind is disliked by the Gods and Buddhas and that is why the sages and holy men say that in such cases it is useless to trouble the divine beings.

There is a saying 'Hear the Way in the morning and die in the evening of that day'. That is perhaps too brutal a way to put the matter but it is undoubtedly true. If a man can live for, say, five or ten years and perform the way which he has learned that is something he may well rejoice about. Our life is very short and our bodily life much limited so do not be negligent. Put your whole heart into this business of carrying out the duties of the Way. This is what I beg of you all.

There is no merit or virtue which comes merely for the asking. Our's is the great Way in which one does not argue about loss or gain. Look at the ideogram for 'Virtue'. It is compounded of two parts: one part means 'straight' and the other 'heart' or 'mind'. The straight heart or mind is the truth of heaven and it is called integrity. Every man who is the vassal of a Lord must be particularly careful to be straight and correct without self-will. He must be wholeheartedly his Lord's man nor may he be one-sided in his loyalty. A man who is correct in these ways and observes the laws of the heavenly truth is a loyal man. Such men should not even hope for any important advantages for themselves. The one word perseverance is all the capital stock or fund which they need for accomplishment. Keep on persevering that is the one great thing to do. And whether it be a high vassal or a mere nobody so long as he keeps on persevering Heaven will pour down blessings on him. And look at

the ideogram for 'straight' too. It also is made up of two parts. One part means 'unity' and the other means 'stop'. If you 'stop' with 'one' simple heart you will be an upright person, one with integrity. When the very roots of our hearts are whole or integrated, at one with their true nature, then they are 'stopped' at 'Unity'. Though the Heaven is high, crouch down! Though the earth is hard, tread on it softly! Great things are destroyed by little things. An embankment of a thousand miles may crumble and fall because of one little frog's hole in it. If you are careless about little things you will accomplish nothing. Everybody, wake up!

Looking back over the history of ancient and modern times there has not been any country, whether China during the Tang dynasty, or our own Japan, which has rejoiced in peace and order. Think of the age of our own Emperor Nintoku (313-400 A.D.). In that era palace and cottage slept with high pillows in all quietness. All the land had peace and everybody had a fat belly. The cities had plenty of gold and jewels, make believe jewels. Wise men and fools alike dressed softly and luxuriously. Tea houses and boatmen's houses flourished. It was all like an imitation paradise. But it was really a great hell. Crowds of men and women were all the time being pushed into extreme perplexity till in the end there came great distress upon all of them.

Many people bear a grudge against this transient world. They do not realize that even this world is better than they themselves have deserved to reach. They talk, too, about the Buddha, but they don't know what the Buddha is. Indeed the Buddhas are for them only something to make use of. Fortunate are they if by some one chance in a thousand they are able to take advantage of a little of the instruction which can be found in the world of men.

I am afraid that this long discourse may have been wearying to you. The measure of words is like the seas and the mountains—nothing but an overflow of delusions. They should all be shut up in one tiny mustard seed. And then there would be nothing—no rice, no goods for sale in the store. I have to write this from sheer necessity, and my essay is not in good order because of my other occupations.

In conclusion I wish to express my felicitations to you all.
'The Sound of a rough Gale in a new Jewel'

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

Dated. The First year of Non-Attachment³ in the era of Non-Separative cycle.² Day of the Full Moon of the Absolute and Identity of the Several Vehicles.

Second Year of Kwan-Ei (1749 A.D.) Fourth Calendar Sign of the Horse. Fourth Month. Day of the Birth of the Buddha (8th Day of the 4th Month).

Place of writing. The Universe where Reality¹ and Phenomena are conjoined, Land of Non-Birth.²

County of Wonders. Village of Annihilation.³ Temple of the Real Aspect of all the Dharmas.

Written by the Chief Priest of the Hall of Vision. A disciple of Thunder Light and Morning Dew.

Subject of the Essay. Entry to the Way of the Cell of the Mirage Flowers in the Sky.

A disciple of the great Teacher Ip-Pen of the Temple of Throwing away Life and Destroying the Body.

Corrected and edited by Punty Alone of the Cell of Non-Difficulty in the Monastery of the Law World and the Temple of Aspects And a disciple of the Priest All Aspects and Non-Aspects in the Temple of Immovability and Sincerity.

III

OTAFUKU JORO NO KOBIKI UTA

THE PLAIN LOOKING COURTESAN'S BALLAD OF BRAVADO

A courtesan constant! An egg square! A moonlight night
on the last day of the month!

Everybody talks all the time about the will of heaven. It is hateful to be censured by heaven.

Love letters, lots of love letters. Often they are love-lorn letters. But I don't like temporary flowers. I am afraid of the very idea of having lots of men. I am sorry, too, for those who are good looking.

People praise me for my good looks, and they say that I, who sleep alone and don't, like men, kill life. I do not kill. Yo-ichi of Nasu may kill with the point of his spear. Many kill with their bright eyes.

There may be lots and lots of gentlemen, but for me there is only one beloved one.

The ditty sung by an old woman may be entertaining, but she may not be able to play a tune on a flute. It is all right to sing when one knows the tune, but be careful what you sing if your guest be an unrefined boor.

Down, down, prostrate yourselves. The seventh Buddhas are coming. Our Prince Sakyamuni is coming too. Just listen for a little while. You will remember the most important things. If you are yearning for life you may be throwing it away. Old men, and old women, listen to the words of my ditty.

Everything that we do is impermanent. This is the law of life-death, and of cessation of life and cessation of death. It is the discovery of the happiness of Nirvana. You may not know it, but the great Kōbō Taishi disentangled the skein for us and put it into his 'I Ro Ha Ni Ho He To'.² If you can't find it there then

listen to the drum minstrel who puts the big and little things all together in his songs

Really and truly this passing world is a fickle place, isn't it? We, men and women, mountains, rivers, the sun, the moon, morning and evening, bamboos, trees, the whole earth—no sooner has the flower blossomed than it falls No sooner is a thing completed than it fails No sooner is one born than one dies Everything which exists comes to nought And yet! and yet! Don't we all of us think that we are going to be in this world for a very long time, as if for thousands and ten thousands of years?

But while we are loitering here and there, lingering about or tramping around, the hurricane of impermanence suddenly bursts upon us We know not when or where Strong men who seem as if they might overcome demons in wrestling matches, beautiful maidens who look like angels—not one of them can step aside out of the path of the storm All of them come to the time when they have to draw their last breath

So it seems as if the four great fundamentals of which our bodies are composed return to nothingness and that only one thing is left—and that is our mind The good and evil things which we have done during our life have no outward shape They do not turn into earth or ashes, but they lead us onwards Good works lead us to a good place, bad works lead us to a bad place The stage screen changes We put on different stage dresses All this is in accordance with the law of karma There are the six abodes—heaven the world of men, hell, the world of hungry demons and so on People are reborn as cows or horses They are born, they die Nothing is settled For the truth is that there is no permanence anywhere, not even in our acts and words This is the law of life-death

If your own minds do not assure you of these truths, then follow the teachings of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas Set your selves to carry out correctly their rules and teachings Cut off and destroy in yourselves the roots of avarice, anger, ignorance, pride When you have cut off and destroyed the 'life-death of the Six Worlds' (as it is called) that will be the cessation of both life and death When you reach that stage your mind will come to an end and there will be real peace, the calm of non attachment to forms and shapes of the world Then the moon will be your pillow so peacefully will you sleep The sky will be

your couch, and you will command a view of the Lotus store-world of Amida and Vairocana. Your body and soul will be pure. Everything will be pure. This is the first entry into Nirvana. Then you will find yourselves rubbing shoulders with Sakyamuni, with Avalokitesvara (Kwannon), with Jizo (Krishnagarbha). Then you will find yourselves rowing the boat of the Vow, which ferries sentient beings across the river to the Nirvana shore. Then you will be able to go about teaching the divine mysteries in all the ten regions of the universe. Then you will bring salvation to father, mother, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, those still living in the world and those who from unbegotten eternity may still be wandering painfully in the six worlds. You will be able to guide every one of them away from old age, from sickness and death, away from the roots producing branches of ever-recurring existence. And you will be able to enthrone them on the Calyx, glorious with the seven treasures, where delicious foods of a hundred flavours will be provided for them. There you and they will be clothed like heavenly beings, according to your heart's desire. There you will be in the company of hosts of angels. There your ears will be charmed with the most marvellous tunes of music. There you will be able to rejoice in the sight of the variegated flowers which come down from heaven. In short, you will become Buddhas. Oh! Wouldn't you like that? Don't you long for that?

If you are not entirely averse to these joys, then just listen again. This mind which all of us possess is what is important. It must be kept firm and resolute . . . It may bring forth a Buddha, or it may build up a hell. It is the most untrammelled and wicked fellow. So do not let anybody be careless about it. In this transient world of ours it is not only old men and women who must be careful. Healthy, young and strong men and girls can never know what may happen to these bodies of ours, even before this very night falls. It is foolish to be careless about it. Whether one likes it or not, the aged and the young alike may have to throw off their lives at any moment. But although we all of us know this we prefer to look the other way. If we could see some shape or form of our mind, riotous with the five lusts, reflected in some mirror for us it would be a repulsive sight, from top to bottom. Men after long ages of rebirth at last come to birth in this world of men and then they behave

listen to the drum minstrel who puts the big and little things all together in his songs

Really and truly this passing world is a fickle place, isn't it? We, men and women, mountains, rivers, the sun, the moon, morning and evening, bamboos, trees, the whole earth—no sooner has the flower blossomed than it falls No sooner is a thing completed than it fails No sooner is one born than one dies Everything which exists comes to nought. And yet! and yet! Don't we all of us think that we are going to be in this world for a very long time, as if for thousands and ten thousands of years?

But while we are loitering here and there, lingering about or tramping around, the hurricane of impermanence suddenly bursts upon us We know not when or where Strong men who seem as if they might overcome demons in wrestling matches, beautiful maidens who look like angels—not one of them can step aside out of the path of the storm All of them come to the time when they have to draw their last breath

So it seems as if the four great fundamentals of which our bodies are composed return to nothingness and that only one thing is left—and that is our mind The good and evil things which we have done during our life have no outward shape They do not turn into earth or ashes, but they lead us onwards Good works lead us to a good place, bad works lead us to a bad place The stage screen changes We put on different stage dresses All this is in accordance with the law of karma There are the six abodes—heaven the world of men, hell, the world of hungry demons and so on People are reborn as cows or horses They are born, they die Nothing is settled For the truth is that there is no permanence anywhere, not even in our acts and words This is the law of life-death

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And then—Ah, Ah, here it comes, creaking, groaning, the strident noisy cart of fire. People are loaded on to it and carried off. At the river of the three rapids²⁹ every stitch of clothing is peeled off not even an under vest is left on. Barefooted men and women are driven off and set in front of Emma, the great king. There they are placed in front of the pure crystal mirror³⁰ of the Sphatika jewel, and there will be reflected all the things, without exception, which have been done in the body, with the mouth and with the mind during their earthly life. There will be no deviation to right or left. And no one will be able to do anything about it.

When the first scrutiny has been completed, each devil according to his proper allotted task, will take the criminal to one of the one hundred and thirty six hells³¹ . . . There will also be the cursed varieties of the eight hot and cold hells, the sword mountain³² and the dagger tree hells, the hall of wailing, the hell of the black rope³³ and the lake of blood³⁴ . . . Terrifying, indeed, is it not?

Well, there is no end to what I might say about these hells. And, everybody, this is not a matter for other people to think about. It is our own affair. For it is our own minds which are like the green room in a theatre. So changeful are our minds. In these we may see all sorts of changes going on, like the jugglery of ball throwing, the ball passing so quickly from one hand to the other, from right to left. How quickly does the glance of one's eye alter. At one minute the polite and courteous look when a man is in the presence of a high ranking person, changes to the hypocritical look when one is in the presence of one's own lord or parent. The fond look when one is with one's favourite child or wife. Pleasant as Jizo when borrowing money in the morning, angry and distorted, like Emma when going to repay it in the evening. Pride and insolence in a temple where there is no resident priest. Perverted flattery deceiving one's own self. Rebellion against the teaching of the way of heaven. Murder, unmercifulness. Self pleasing in one's tastes. Providing for one's own family at the cost of other people's lives. Injuring and causing distress to others without feeling that there is anything wrong in so doing. Not judging the feelings of others though one has one's own feelings. The mind which thinks it can pass through this world only by getting money. Even when it does not do so by breaking through walls, it does so by dis-

like hungry demons, or like even lower grades of demons, and even like devils. They never stop striving for fame. From morn to eve, in high ranks and low ranks there is the lust of property and the lust for sensual pleasures. The whole heart is clouded and the bright world becomes dark. Oh! so dark, dark, dark. It becomes the black land of the senses. The original Amida and the Buddha who dwell in us are painted over with the impurities of the ten wickednesses and the eight falsities,²² till at last they are so splashed and smarmed over that they cannot be recognized. And it is we ourselves, who with our own hands do this! We build up our own hells! What does this, is the false or non-Buddha nature in us . . .

The non-Buddha nature shows itself in those who hold the false view which keeps a man attached to the idea that this body of ours is utterly brought to an end at its death and that this world and with it this body will continue to inexhaustible eternity. It is the nature which thinks itself smart and clever in its worldly wisdom. It is a state of spiritual laziness. It has no discernment of the law of Karma, and selfishly indulges in the three poisons and the five lusts. It indolently and insolently denies, both by the views it holds and by its words, Sakyamuni's teaching about the ten rules²³ and the five rules,²⁴ about the purifying of the six roots²⁵ as taught also in the worship of the great goddess Amaterasu, and the five human²⁶ relationships and five eternal²⁷ virtues taught by Confucius. People in this class are the ones whom the Buddha spoke of as being non-Buddha natures. There are large numbers of this class in this world and the hells are crowded with them.

In the hells such persons are surrounded by a retinue of all sorts of devils—red and blue devils, devils with ox heads, devils with horse heads, all girded with tiger skins. These may not be visible to the naked eye, but they are there all the same. All ranks of people are to be found here, men of high rank, boatmen, grooms, millionaires, beggars. Every one of them has his name inscribed on the iron tablets.

Every morning Emma, the great King with his ten attendant²⁸ kings and his whole staff of officials, come together to receive reports, and then they consult and seize the sentient beings as spoils of war. Then parents, children, grand-children down to the sixth generation are separated. No attention is paid to the weeping when the families are pulled apart.

of the Buddha and the holy men and sages. Be careful to observe the precepts of filial piety, of brotherliness, of loyalty and fidelity. Do not be careless about the state of faith in your mind. Lead a disciplined life. Surely this is not too difficult for you . . .

(Here follow lessons from the birds and fish, which are also given in the Drum Minstrel's Song. q.v.)

All these things the little birds and fishes teach you, and you can see them every day, but you don't keep your eyes fixed on them. You don't let your ears retain the lessons. You lose your self respect when you find that you are of lower moral degree even than the birds and four-footed creatures.

If we really and truly understood what is our true personal dignity, we should at once spring to our feet and change our very hearts and minds. We should worship the three treasures and reverence the patriarchs. We should put filial piety first and above all else. We should preserve that proper and respectful love between husband and wife. We should be cordial in the courtesy of our behaviour towards our brothers and friends. We should never forget our duty of fidelity towards our relatives and neighbours. We should have compassion on the sick and the poor. We should work with all our might for our home and family. We should be obedient to the ordinances of our rulers. We should be merciful, honest and patient, so as to be good examples to all men. Then without appearing to instruct we should in the most natural way be able to act as guides. Then all classes of the people would associate in peace. Everyone would pass through life with smiling faces, co-operating with the Buddha and the Gods of heaven and earth.

Then the eight million Gods, Bonten (Brahma), Taishaku (Indra), Daikoku, Bishamon—all of them would be a protection to you. Evil demons and false gods would flee. There would be no sickness. The whole world would be at peace. The five harvest grains would mature and every home be prosperous. The children who were born would be good too.

So! Everybody don't forget to repeat, morning and evening the Sutras, or say the 'Hail Arhat' or the 'Hail Amida' or the Sutra of the Lotus. These are all swords to cut away the roots of ignorance. If you recite these words with sincerity and conviction the words which come from your mouth will go into

honest exchanges made on the abacus and with the writing brush. Knowing how to rob the Gods. Forgetting the benefits received from one's Lord or from one's parents. Living the life of cat and dog in one's own family. Mothers in law glaring at daughters in law. Daughters in law making faces at mothers in law. Insincerity and unfilial conduct, like a fire spreading and starting other fires by evil speaking and gossip. Husbands pretending they are not 'drawing two bows at the same time'. Housewives using two measures, and then when burnt a little in one place becoming green with jealousy till their very bosoms burn with it. And when the flame of jealousy flares up being maddened into frenzy, so that horns seem to grow on their foreheads. But to go and hang or drown oneself is not much of an honour, is it?

And then, again, if one's own opinions are not accepted by people at once, one begins to slander, insinuate, boast and say that people are all against you. Both parties soon become angry and try to depreciate the other and talk about 'mine, theirs, his, this, cackle, cackle, quarrel, quarrel', and so it goes on till hatred and desire to hurt pile up into a great heap. At last cutting and slashing begins. Or there is addiction to gambling, carousals, unrestrained drinking bouts, till real crimes take place which shorten the life of fathers and mothers—everything seems to be done in utter recklessness.

All these things are the sowing of the seeds of the hells. Even if men have done good deeds in past existences and owing to the merit accumulated have now reached the stage of birth in this world of mankind, yet for people who do the sort of things mentioned above the hells of the future are fixed. And that is why the Buddha is so full of pity. All living beings in this world have received some benefit or other, from father or mother in previous worlds, and now they want to repay their benefactors in some way. But no matter how much they may wish to help those who have helped them in the past, no one can escape from the evil which he has created for himself by his own activities. The seeds sown are seeds sown in the mind, and these seeds come up in unexpected places, here one, there ten thousand, and each must reap the pains and griefs of eternity.

If you do not want to reap those seeds, then from this very day and moment cut straight back to the fundamental nature in yourselves. Study and accept the truth of the divine teaching,

IV

ANSHIN HOKORI TATAKI

THE CALM MIND BEATING OUT THE DUST

DOWN, down Prostrate yourselves before the Tathagata Saky
amuni

Hello, everybody Listen Listen to me won't you

People in every land recognize the authority of their own
parents, but not so Siddharta, who was the Buddha

From the days of his youth he became fond of going about
the world, just as if he had been a merchant He threw away
the family rank which he had inherited He threw it away with
a 'pop' And when he was nineteen he went away into the
mountains There he begged two hermits, Alara³⁵ and Kalara,
to be his teachers For them he gathered the bark of trees, he
drew water, he cut firewood Thus he heaped up capital till at
the end of thirty years he was able to open his own store This
store he called the Kagon store (The Maha Vaipulya Buddha
avatamsaka Sutra teaching) Here he had a splendid stock of
goods for sale Soon after opening this store two men came to
buy One was called Manjusri (Monju) and the other was Fuken
(Samanta bhadra) But the goods were too high priced for most
people, and the other customers seem to have been either blind
or deaf At any rate they would not look at his wares As this
would never do, he started off with another assortment and
began to display cheaper goods These he called Agon (Agama)
No sooner had he switched on this message than his shop began
to be crowded with regular clients So, little by little, he laid in
a bigger stock of goods and widened out his business with the
Hō Tō Hannya (Maha Prajna Paramita Sutras), and seizing the
opportunity he skilfully sold to his clients the Hokke teaching
(Saddharma Pundarika Sutra), and the Nehan (Maha Para
Nirvana Sutra) each according to his nature and qualifications
Then a famous man named Sudatsu (Sudatta) took a fancy to

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

your ears and the illusions will disappear, so that you will attain to the state of samadhi. Delight in the Buddha heart and the Buddha heart in delight! All this may come about without your having to leave the place where you happen to be. This is the true entry into the pure land.

And there is a still nearer way, the way of correct meditation. Those who wish for this spirit of meditation should come to perform the meditation on the great good and on wisdom. But do not think that this is like the proverbial 'bota mochi', a cake that falls into the mouth from the shelf. It will not do so. It will not fill your stomach just because I tell you about it. Unless you drink water you will not know whether it is cold or hot.

The six lower orders of sentient beings and the four higher orders have but one unchanging substance. If they can but perceive this one reality they will understand that this transient world is indeed nothing other than an entry into light. If one goes wrong about this reality then nothing is left but the three evil hells.

So I want to repeat over and over again. Do not be careless. When the hurricane of impermanence strikes there will be no time to wait a minute. Slowly but surely one by one past things are getting further away, future things are getting nearer, and when death comes one or other kind of body will become fixed. So what is important is never to forget that what is essential is enlightenment.

All the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas were at one time ordinary mortals like ourselves. They attained to enlightenment and accomplished all the virtues perfectly and now they are free to help all sentient beings to cross to the other shore. Therefore let each one of us learn from them. Then when you are actually at the treasure mountain you will not have to swing empty hands. Make sure of enlightenment. Don't wait till the drought to dig your well. Listen. I beg you to this great truth. Chew on it. Do not throw it away. Oh! Make up your minds and set your wills to step out on the way of Bodhi knowledge.

chronic disease due to evil activities performed before the beginning of the age and to illusions and doubts in a sick mind. But here was this marvellous medicine on the spot and at the instant—just by repetition of the mystic word Anokutara⁴¹ which healed while the sweat poured out of the body. Here indeed is a pivot of fundamental power.

Do I hear you say 'Too easy'? 'Such wares are intended only to deceive old men and women.' Many doubt their efficacy and ask of the wise if there is not some other way more suited for clever people. And Sakyamuni pointed straight back at the heart of man and said that within one's own heart there is to be found the true Buddha nature. Then the Buddha smiled. So also did Maha Kasyapa who received this particular kind of goods. This good is the main truth which has been handed down in succession from one generation of disciples to another.

Open your eyes and look. What is Sakyamuni? And what are we? We shall see the inexpressible mind nature, enlightened and complete calm, seeing nothing doing nothing. We shall have unearthed a marvellous treasure. When you begin to practise meditation, seeing with the real eyes, at first you may become drowsy, your knees may tremble, your back may hurt, the pupils of your eyes may become dilated. This is when you must persevere. Rouse yourself. You will feel like when something that you lent your neighbour three years ago is unexpectedly returned to you. 'Three pints of black beans, one bushel of chaff.' Utter illusion when you recall these to your mind.

But if that particular method does not suit your nature are there any other goods hawked round in this trade? What about the secret mystery of Shingon? Here we come across that mystic syllable 'A' which represents the first principle, the principle of negation, of the Non Birth of the elements of existence. This principle must become a sort of endowment within one's own mind. Next there is the mystic syllable 'Ra'⁴² which represents the elements (Dharmas) within each individual mind and which discriminates sense objects and discerns the five wisdoms,⁴³ the five fundamentals as well as the diamond and womb worlds. All these objects of our sense knowledge are born within our breasts, as if we were their parents. When we know this we rise to the rank of Buddha. These goods are goods in the trade of self salvation.

But although this is a quick and perfect way of becoming a

him and provided him with a mansion, called the Gion Seisha (Jetavana Vihara) where he could display his wares. From this time his fame began to spread and his business flourished. Every one under heaven praised him and called him their father.

About this time one of his medicines, called the Law of the Lotus, the Secret of the Wondrous Law, became very popular. One of those who purchased this was the little daughter²⁷ of Sagara, the Dragon King. She took the medicine and became as enlightened as the Buddha himself. Very different from our own mothers. But at this time also the unconquered king Ajase²⁸ (Ajatasatru, son of Bimbisara) joined in a secret plot with Devadatta to try and close the store. In carrying out this plot this king shut up his mother Itaike²⁹ (Vaidehi) in prison so that she should not be able to purchase any of Sakyamuni's goods. The poor lady hated this world as a joyless land and suffered from an illness called the 'Sickness of the Five Obstacles'³⁰ for women as well as from the three obediences³¹ (Obstacles to woman's salvation). Realizing that she had no spiritual capital she prayed that if there were any medicine to meet her case it might be sent to her. When one prays to Sakyamuni even from a great distance, he is aware of it. He perceived that there might be many customers like this lady, so he began to sell some goods which he had stored away in his warehouse for more than forty years. Then with two assistants, Ananda and Mokuren (Maudgalyana) he went to the king's palace and gave Itaike a tasteful medicine, which he had compounded at the time he took his great vow during the five kalpas. This medicine is the 'Calling upon the Name of Amida', and it is wrapped up in the six syllables Na Mu A Mi Da Butsu. It means absolute concentration on Amida's name. It makes no difference whether this is taken before or after birth in this world.

For this medicine no capital or special wisdom is needed. All one has to do is to recite the words with your mouth. The thoughts of the mind may perhaps be unsettled, not yet having attained to the stage of the wisdom of the heavenly eye, and the wisdom may be so feeble that it will never be a capital wisdom. Sakyamuni warned people that for such a serious trouble as that of the five obstacles³² for which hope has been given up, there is no other medicine. In the case of this lady herself and her five hundred attendants all the doctors of the three worlds had thrown up the sponge, because it was now a

and ask the priest at your temple. Oh, everybody. How happy should we be. Confucianism and Shintoism are rival tradesmen. They call our teaching by all sorts of bad names, but our Father's is a store of long established business and it is really marvellous. It's original office was in a side street in India, but it established a branch office in our land. Now its wares are on sale in all the eight and nine sects. If one does not like these goods there is nowhere else to go for them. So with all respect I urge everybody of all ranks to make use of this tablet medicine of the Six syllables every morning and night. Then the four seas will be calm. The present age will be prosperous. The next generations will be long-lived. The prayers of this age and the blessings of the next age will not produce anything better than these.

I am not telling lies. Sakyamuni has not made a muddle of things. This is the real law.

Dated. The tenth Month of the First Year in the Sign of the Monkey. In the era of Meiwa (1764).
Under the Sala Tree. Spoken by the aged Sendai.

Buddha, as taught in the Law of the Lotus, and is an excellent medicine, yet we do not all have the patience needed for it. So it is no better than an advertisement sign, pointing to the opening words of the sutras. Even if we proceed to read them we have not the capital wisdom sufficient to purchase these goods. So we turn to the truth which was not revealed for forty years.⁴⁴ And this is the six⁴⁵ syllable name, which is an abbreviation of the Lotus sutra (Hokke Kyo Saddharma Pundarika). When you have swallowed this medicine, which is the eight rolls of these unexcelled scriptures, then you will be born into the western paradise of Amida.

Which of all these goods will you choose? It is a matter of calculating. Rather than taking a long way round, would you not prefer to choose the short route, which needs no money or toll but just requires you to call on the name of Amida? It may be wise to choose to wear coarse clothes, to eat only twice a day and to practise the discipline according to the rules, but it will be useless unless we 'catch either the fleas or the lice'. Even if you do not put out your hand to steal, if you covet a thing in your heart that is the parent of evil. When there is no mother there will be no child. And also 'everybody tells a lie sometimes'. What about our behaviour at weddings and such times, even if one does not get drunk? One cannot pass through life without the ten thousand intercourses. No wonder we cannot observe the five rules. Whatever you may think about these methods of the Buddha's trade, none of them can be carried out without patience and perseverance. So whatever you do, come back to your Father's teaching and carry on that trade which needs no capital wisdom, the six syllabled name. That will require all our patience. But if you have some capital wisdom to spend try the self relying method. If your capital is too slim that will not do, for when your fortune has all been spent you will go astray and find yourself stranded in a field of tea shrubs.

So listen to the old story. The great founders of the sects all had plenty of capital wisdom, yet they did not despise or reject this good medicine of the six syllables. Much more then, should not we who have no wisdom capital and little patience decide not to hobble along on a self relying way, but rather ride in the boat of that method which tells us to rely on the other?

An ordinary mortal can become a Buddha. This is like a tile or a stone becoming gold! If you think I am telling lies, then go

much more should their influence and authority increase. They should be as precious to us as the members of our own imperial family.

But just think, everybody. How fortunate if even a trifling bit of the vision of the Way is seen by us, that vision which mangles and cuts into small pieces those causes of evil—that vision for which the Gods and Buddhas dart about us and ripple round us in their love and mercy for us. How fortunate it is for us. So apply yourselves to this correct way with all possible industry and zeal.

What you all call evil is no doubt murder or setting fire to people's houses, or stealing, and of course you do not do that sort of evil. Your ears are frozen when you listen to groundless falsehoods about hell and devils after you hear of the death of someone by some 'fate'. And the white robed layman fancies himself safe because he has his three meals a day like a man of high rank, and though he chatters away like a parrot or a monkey, he does not see the essential matters even in his dreams. He surrenders to 'reasoning and self', matters of words, without knowing the truth at all. And anyway it would be no use at all if he did know the truth if his acts were evil.

If a sick man does not drink his medicine, why, even a famous physician like Hen Jaku⁶ or a sage like Ki ba⁷ would have to throw up the sponge. And that is why Asendai⁸ and others have had to repeat over and over till they were utterly weary the message that not even the Buddha can bring salvation to any sentient being if that being has no affinity with Buddhahood. And who is this Asendai? What has he done for us? Asendai is not something outside ourselves. People who ask who he is are Asendais in embryo.

These things which I am speaking about are more precious than a pot of gold handed down in a family for ten generations, but they will be of no use at all when the crisis comes if one twists and crosses his words this way and that way trying to explain what one thinks. For the crisis is nothing other than this—it is when the messenger comes from the land of darkness. You may then hope to use logical arguments or to put your case in this way or that, but you will not be permitted to argue at all for at that very instant the vizard before the eyes of Emma will look very fine-meshed and no one will even expect to escape. You will be led away as a prisoner. That will be a terrible

V

DAI DO CHO BO KURE

THE DRUM MINSTREL'S SONG OF THE WAY

Here he comes Here he comes Ah, Ah, he comes Watch
He comes Nothing less Never Again Down, down Prostrate
yourselves Everybody listen carefully

This fellow inside of us, which we call our mind, and which each one of us calls his own, this fellow has no eye or nose He has no hand or foot Dear me Dear me He is altogether a bad fellow I need not tell you but even if he were to live in this world for a thousand years—it may happen just when one is off one's guard all of a sudden—look out, look out, the messenger of impermanence may come to fetch him Won't that be a crisis? Ah *how flustered and agitated shall we be*

And even while we are being led off by this messenger, we still go on deceiving ourselves thinking that unless a man has money he is hardly to be considered a man And from the top of our head to the sole of our foot whether we are standing up or sitting down, we never forget about matters of lusts and merits

But, indeed, what good fortune it is that we should have come this once into this world of men, which is so hard to attain to, in the cycle of existences Because we have here the great high way where there are the five human relationships and the five cardinal virtues to be practised, things so highly regarded by holy men and sages And it is a precious thing too for us to have these holy men and sages, to teach us and explain to us all about goodness and evil falsity and truth, so fully and without adding or subtracting from them We cannot count, we cannot add to or subtract from the days, months and years which have passed since the world came into existence, and nearer and nearer comes the end of the last age So much then should the thirst for teachers of the Way increase So much the more precious to us should be the Gods and the Buddhas So

three virtues of honesty, patience and kindness every day till it becomes easy to do so, and carry on your religious duties too, with every breath, without straining yourselves at all. And take the beads of your rosaries into your hands and count them in the proper way, one hundred and eight times,^a one with each breath that you draw in. Then your inner minds will become resplendent, for the body of Amida will be formed in you. He will be so close to you that you will be amazed.

All this sounds easy, but there is one unfortunate thing about it. For this mind of ours changes so rapidly. It changes quicker than children playing a game. When you are in the presence of a great nobleman then your face shows polite looks* . . . But in the presence of your creditors etc. your face is like Emma's. This mind of ours is like a green-eyed monster, it changes so quickly. Where will it all end?

Or remember what we think about the weather. We speak of the rain, the wind, the thunder and lightning as part of heaven's regime and we are very afraid and reverential about it at such times. But if the weather happens not to meet with our own convenience we curse and scold at it. But that does not make the weather change. Or we point at the sun and moon in reverence and make enquiries of them, and yet we don't mind behaving in quite unseemly ways in their full view. There is nothing but impudence in the way we rebel against heaven and earth.

Such is what comes out of our opinionated minds and there is nothing of the teaching of the Way in them.

ALAS. Alas. It is all very terrifying. What shall the like of us do?

The above is Hakuin's Chobo Kure.

Signed 'Author with the Heavenly Eye'.

Whether what is said above is true or not he who can discriminate will know.

Here it has been transcribed by one seeking for the Divine Blessing. End.

* See Otafuku Joro no Kobikiuta, p. 26.

moment. If everybody is wriggling and wandering about in confusion in this present world, the future world will be a rough and fearsome time. And think of the poor Gods and Buddhas who want to help us in some way, but at that time what will they be able to do? Even if their tears of pity flow down like rivers they will not be able to save us from the excess of evil which we shall have produced by our own acts during our lifetime.

So, everybody, never let yourselves be off guard.

Think of the fishes. There is that fellow we call a carp. He is a clever fellow. He climbs up waterfalls and the rapids of streams with a great 'heave and a ho' with a great push and a shove, and he nearly succeeds in becoming a dragon.

And the fox, too. He surprises us by jumping so lightly over the sacred Torii of Inari, and seems to become a deity himself.

We can learn from the pigeon too. He seems too stupid as he stoops and says coo, coo, but he is making his three polite bows of invitation and courtesy.

The sparrow's song tells us of the one way of loyalty, for what he chirps is the sound Chū, Chū, which in our language means loyalty.

The raven with his caw, caw practises his filial duty, for he feeds his parents, and his words in our language mean filial piety (Ko-Kō).

All these creatures call and sing to us by day and night, but no one seems to listen to them. From dawn to dusk. Ah, is it man alone who does nothing but whistle meaninglessly? Is it man alone who is so casual? Surely he will lose his self respect if it can be said that he is less than the little fishes and the birds?

But you must not lose your self respect. Get back to the source of your true nature, and don't forget to carry out your duties of filial piety, brotherliness, loyalty and faithfulness. Become true men.

Really and truly there is no way of becoming a god or a Buddha unless you start from your own true nature. And that should not be a difficult thing to do.

Old grandpa who cannot read his A B C, old grandma who cannot read the ideograms for mercy or for long life—it is no use for you to try to attain anything just by repeating the one word formulas like 'Namu' or 'Nyō-ze-ga mon', or to use long passages of the sutra about Amida. Rather than that practise the

Chinda Hachiro, with the spear that of a Mada, with the long sword that of a Kuro, but though even these men might have been deceived, at times of crisis it is the controlling heart alone which prevents a man becoming a coward. There are not two supreme goods for the heart. He whose heart is rightly fixed is better than the most intelligent and well-informed man in Japan or China.

To clothe his warriors in silk and provide them with good food is only one small part of the lord's business. There is the matter of instructing them in the many arts and other activities of life. But let us leave these matters aside for the time being and consider this matter of controlling the heart. The power to control the heart is truly something to be truly grateful for. The blade of the long sword and the edge of the short sword cannot be compared with this. No arrow or gun can reach up to it. So it has no enemies of that sort. Everything may become the controlling heart within us, the sky, the sun, the moon, the sea, the mountains, yes the very earth we stand on, all may become a heart to control us. This heart of ours is our Takamaga-hara. It is the place where no five lusts, and no three poisons can penetrate. The building up of the nation in prosperity will only go on so long as this supreme good continues steady.

Nor is this only a matter for warriors. Those who enter the religious life, learners of the law, priests and teachers, all of these unless they have hearts which are steady in control are no better than ordinary mortals. Palace, cottage, cottage, palace it is the controlling heart which marks the line of the tides. When men of high degree and low degree, all the ten thousands of the people, have their hearts in steady control, then we may say Banzai. For such a world will need no governing.

Splendid is the merit of the heart in steady control, for with it a man will be able to hear the 'Sound of the Single Hand'. Without it it is useless to talk about enlightenment or about illusion. A man wearing a stole or priest's robe looks very fine, but if he has not his heart in control such apparel is merely funny. Without the controlling heart it is useless to go the pilgrims' rounds of the Western counties²² and of the four provinces.²³ The controlling heart is our elixir instrument, as good as the hermit's elixirs of old. This elixir needs no pots or pans . . .

Old lady, heart control. How old are you? I am the same

VI

SHUSHIN BABA KOBICI UTA

THE LAY OF THE OLD LADY 'HEART CONTROL'

GRACIOUS are the mercies of heaven and earth They give us the heat and the cold, and the day and the night, which do not come together In the day one works, in the night one rests By the grace of the rain and dew the five grains ripen and so do *the trees and herbs in the far off hills* And the benefits given us by our lords are higher than the mountains The land is prosperous down to its lowest cottage and on and on for ten thousand ages As the trees and shrubs bend and flutter in the wind let not the benefits given us by our lords be forgotten And the benefits given us by our parents too, are deeper than the ocean depths He who does not remember these things is no better than a dog or cat The greater the filial piety so much longer will that family flourish Our parents are the field which produces wealth for us in this evanescent world In spite of all this many who have only a short opportunity to show their gratitude run away from and try to escape from their proper duties

One's body may be five feet high, but unless the heart inside it has control that man is but an infant Even the art and skill of a warrior is secondary to this controlling heart. Without that the house is empty with foxes and badgers running about it

There is a famous saying in the book of Dai Kō-Bō of Momibu, written during the era of the Sung dynasty in China In the section about the three great duties of the warrior the question is asked what happens when a sudden and unexpected calamity occurs? The reply is because the heart which should always be in control is not always ready, the warrior's duty is to see that he so disciplines himself that his heart always is in control His prowess with the bow may be such as that of

in our own country true Zen discipline will utterly fall to the ground and strange false laws will be established.

There are some who say that the Zen sects, Ōbaku, Sōdō, Rinzai, all provide true wisdom but that it is only necessary to listen to their teachings. It is not necessary to practise their meditation nor is it necessary to resort to their sutra or patriarchal records. Behind the divine avatars are the real Buddhas, and if one searches for the real Buddhas one will be led astray. If one searches for the law one may lose its real meaning. Buddhahood and Bodhi wisdom are but a dream. Life and death and Nirvana are but the track of a bird through the air. Do not bother about good and evil. Spend your months and days in the white land of the undistorted and real Buddhas. If you disturb the waters of the stream it will become muddy. Do not inquire, do not learn, do not put forth your hand.

But if our law of meditation is true the more important and valuable must it be for the crowd of foolish and lazy people of today. Men do not realize that we are all living Buddhas. They just eat and pass on, and when we see them sleeping side by side we see them as men rowing side by side in a boat and we wonder what sort of goal they will reach. Is this not an omen of the destruction of the law?

What, then, should be undertaken as the correct discipline of enlightenment? Perhaps old lady heart control knows, so let us ask her.

The law has really been given up for the last five hundred years. A large number of people do not know anything about true wisdom, which, however, is the most important business for us. In ancient times there was a revelation about this from the great God of Kasuga. It was given to Kedatsu Shonin,⁵⁵ who was told that since the time of Kuruson Buddha (Karakuchanda, fourth of the seven Buddhas of the earlier eras of Buddhism) those who did not possess the heart wisdom, no matter how wise they might be in other ways, were but teachers of the false way.

And it is this heart wisdom that the old lady sang about in the mountains. It is the wisdom which seeks enlightenment not only for its own sake but so that it may be able to pass on that wisdom to others. It puts the whip to the four vows of the Buddha, and makes men urgent in helping others. This is the most important part of the law. This law duty is above all other works. Oh, how beautiful and gracious it is. Even with a

age as the void. Old father void may die or not as he pleases but I am always present. The mountains and the rivers and the whole earth are my children, so I never lack anything . . .

For a warrior who has been reared by his lord's goodness, it is right to be cautious. Proper caution is the mark of a warrior who has placed his body at the disposal of his lord. It is still his own body but he cannot be entirely free with it. He must keep it carefully. Even if he is called bad names, dog and so on, he must not become angry. For when one is living on behalf of his lord he cannot refuse to go to the bottom of hell. As long as life lasts he must cut through all his own private interests. This is the eternal abode of the brave warrior.

Old lady, heart control, where are you? I dwell in the elixir field and the sea of the spirit. The merit of this elixir is so great that it can break into pieces and grind into powder the high mount Sumeru and the very void itself. It makes all the ten regions, all reality, all attachment, though visible, invisible. Life and death and Nirvana itself become a yesterday's dream. Nor does it leave any trace of illusion or Bodhi wisdom. And there is now no hell into which one may fall, nor any paradise into which one may climb. But without this elixir of mine one will have to perform hard works and undergo hard discipline for twenty or thirty long years before one can attain to such a condition—unless one comes across the knowledge of true enlightenment.

Some there are who, though they have not reached this state, say they have and think they can just follow the dictates of their own hearts. Murder, theft, such things they say leave no mark upon the heart. The five obstructions and the ten evils are now quite a comfort for we have left the law of Karma behind. Such are the words of self will, which come from uninhibited false views. It is really terrible to contemplate such minds, for one knows that the very discernment which one has struggled to obtain, the sense (dharma) of discrimination becomes more than ever a seed producing hell. The original heart control has melted away, and in its stead there are devilish effects, long nosed goblins⁴⁴ (Tengu) running around inside the mind. When men manage the laws of Karma so foolishly, unless they happen to meet a clear minded teacher they will never be able to discover the mystery attained by enlightenment . . .

If what seems to be happening now continues in India, China,

VII

SEGYO NO UTA

A SONG OF ALMSGIVING

THOSE who have riches and honours in this world are reaping the fruits of seeds which they planted in their previous life. Those who do not give alms during their present life will be extremely poor in the future. *Do riches and honour come by shrewdness? Are the slow witted all poor? Poverty may come as the result of too much shrewdness.*

This life depends on the seed of the previous life. The future depends on the seed of this life. The amount of the wealth owned by any man is due to the amount of the seed sown. In this world there are not very many things for us to sow. So choose out our good seed and sow it. If a man begrudges the seed and does not sow it he will never be able to harvest any grain. If no barley was sown in the field no one will reap barley from that field. If you plant one bushel of barley perhaps five or even ten bushels will ripen there. So too, even a little alms produces manifold fruit. You can be sure that if plenty of alms are given the reward will be great.

That is why Sakyamuni and Kwannon urged us to do alms. Even beggars and outcasts, by doing alms as much as they can, may cause a heart of mercy, desiring to save others, to spring up within themselves. The greater our wealth the less sufficient will it seem for our purposes. Unless one hands down some wealth to one's child that child will have no possessions. And even if it be only a small barley or rice field the child who receives it will have that amount of honour with it. If you are praying for the prosperity of your child, then give alms freely, but do so taking care not to harm anybody. If you hold any wealth or treasure obtained by having done injury to somebody then that wealth when handed down to your children will become a cause of bitter feeling. Whatever causes bitter feeling

Buddha's mouth its praises cannot be exhausted. It requires true discernment. But with discernment alone and no performance our own breasts will provide but little nourishment. And with so little nourishment it will not be possible to rear any children. If you cease after only a successful search to attain to the music of the sound of one hand and rest in that success alone, that is nothing better than the heretical teaching about there being no 'effects of karma'. In such a case a man would have to pass through the thousand fold depths of the jungle.

And old lady heart control, when you die where will you go? Stop the sailing boat and be still. One's duty is not fulfilled until one has passed round the forty-nine* bends of the narrow mountain road. And what is the colour and scent of the wind there? The direct heart to heart teaching has been transmitted from Daruma to E-Ka (the Second Chinese Zen Patriarch). In this there are the thousand sicknesses and obstacles which fill up the breasts of disciples. If there were none of these obstacles Zen would die out. One must risk one's very life in order to break through these obstacle barriers, to open these locks. Without these it would not be true Zen teaching. There must be difficulties even as there are difficulties for the carp which leaps up the ten thousand leagues of the Dragon's Way, and in the way of the fox which has to pass through the sacred Torii of the Inari goddess. Even if one's daily food is Zen the duties and correct conditions are not fulfilled unless one breaks through these locks and barriers . . .

All the great teachers clearly perceived each thing, one by one, and searched the sutras through, and even studied outside teachings. That was the way in which they gathered the innumerable treasures of the law. Only thus were they able to save the two powers⁷ of hearing and obeying the law. It is inside these three powers that we must seek for the 'seedling'. Be sure to find that seedling. The temples and the Shinto protection are both required for this. They are like the two wings of a bird enabling it to fly. But the great work is that of the Bodhisattvas, and this will persist, even though the great void were to have an end.

Do not be negligent. Keep your body in good health. With this last word the old lady will bring her talk to a close.

tion. So begin to 'lend money' by doing alms. That is true piety. Let those of high degree begin to compete with each other in this good work, saying me too, me too! To save the life of the poor is a broad and infinitely good deed. Will there be no merit attaching to the man who is respected by the poor?

People who have to go and pick up the food which is thrown away by others are those who did not sow sufficient seed in their previous existence, so they are now beggars willy, nilly. But when you see them be sure that you cause a feeling of benevolence to rise in your heart. Without piety *no one is truly human*. And without piety in this life there is no difference between a man and a cow or a horse.

in others will cause the child to whom it is handed down to 'sink'.

Do not be unjust with your measure, your scales or your abacus or your writing brush. Those who make unjust profits in their trade will assuredly go to the three hells. Their houses will be overgrown with weeds. Any behaviour which is not in accord with the true way of man causes harm to a man's descendants. If a house is prosperous in this world it is rich because the parents of that house have not done evil.

Even if one is no longer with one's parents one must remember to be grateful to them for all the blessings they have provided. The parental heart cannot bear a rough wind to blow upon its child. Since our parents have given us so much care and attention it is foolish not to care for those parents. An unfilial child is worse than a kite or a crow.

There is no better deed than to help those who are starving. Remember that no matter how rich a man may be there will be nothing that sticks to his body. He will be starting out on the way to the land of darkness without wife or child, without cash. He will hear nothing with his ears, see nothing with his eyes, and he will go out of the gate of his house not knowing his destination. There will then be no limit to his remorse. That is why we should all of us plant the seeds of Bodhi, while this life lasts. Life is a fragile thing. Is it not called the 'Dew Life'? Tonight a headache begins and soon one is hovering between life and death. There are some who boast of their strength but die that very evening. Today one attends the funeral of a friend. Tomorrow it is one's own funeral. So, what are you going to do with your gold and silver? Let him who has it and honour and happiness distribute alms to the poor. There is no merit in living in wealth for the man who does not give alms to the poor. Help the poor and needy. Even little dogs must make a living. The spirit of mercy is itself a good root. It is a prayer for the prosperity of one's own family. He who performs acts of mercy is protected by the Gods and Buddhas. No kings of lust have dominion over him. No false teachings will cleave to him. The roots of mercy are a prayer. Ponder this well.

If there is no merciful giving of alms avarice will remain too great. He who does not see the poor is taking up the attitude of a devil, without any root of mercy within his heart. There will be no treasure left over in that man's house for the next genera-

As for the Meditation of the Mahayana
Where can the evil regions be?

Recollection of the Buddha, Repentance, The Discipline of Life
When once these have entered our ears
Then he who performs one meritorious act of Meditation
Much more he who has 'turned himself round'
From such the Pure Land is not far distant.

He who has ceased from vain argumentation
He who extols and rejoices in the goodness of others
He who realizes that 'Form' is 'Non-Form'
He who bears witness to the nature of the Self as Originat-
ing Essence.

To such an one singing and dancing are alike the voice of the
Law
He has opened the gate of the Absolute Undifferentiated
Nature
When that happens what is there to seek?
Whether one goes on or returns there is no 'elsewhere'
The very body he has is indeed Buddha.

The sky of the unhindered Samādhi is broad
Just as there can be no ice without water, so Nirvana is
immediately present. To go seeking it in distant places
—How foolish—
So do you become the son of that rich man.⁵⁹

VIII

ZA ZEN WASAN³⁴

SONGS IN PRAISE OF MEDITATION

The primary essence of all sentient beings is Buddha
The originating nature of the self is the Non Buddha nature
Without sentient beings there is no Buddha

The reckless way of utter absorption is the true way
As one who is immersed in water
So make the thought of the Nonthought the whole of your
thought

Even when one is tramping along dark roads
Those roads are themselves the Lotus Land
This is more than sufficient for rejoicing and praise

Even as water and ice go together
So good works of graciousness
Do not know any attachment to sentient things
Nevertheless they destroy the innumerable accumulations
of sins
They are like the utterance of the mystic cry (at enlighten
ment)

How thankworthy is the Law
By it the causes and relationships of the Six Regions of the
Wheel
Receive endless happiness
Escape from the Life-Death cycle will take place

Almsgiving Obedience to the laws the paramitas
All are but the dark road of our own ignorance
But all of them come to an end in the Law

SERMONS TO PARISHIONERS

ated, and are composed of Six Tsu or supernatural, magical talents, and some of the so called Shomon (Hachi Shomon) These eight Shomon are: correct views, correct thought, correct language, correct mode of life, correct energy (ascetic energy), correct calm, correct memory of the law and correct practice of the law.

Alternatively the TEN POWERS are powers of knowledge . . .

(i) Knowledge of what is and what is not reason.

(ii) Knowledge of what causes will cause what results.

(iii) Knowledge of absolute reality of all the varieties of dhyana meditation.

(iv) Knowledge of the dissimilarity of the higher and lower 'root natures' of sentient beings, and the degrees of 'rewards' obtainable by them.

(v) Knowledge of the various desires for pleasure and how to overcome them

(vi) Knowledge of the differing natures of sentient beings.

(vii) Knowledge that all 'asavas' (illusions) tend to their 'proper' results, and knowledge of what those results are.

(viii) Knowledge of the times of birth and death of all sentient beings

(ix) Knowledge of the past life in this world of men

(x) Knowledge of how to cause all illusions to cease and so attain Nirvana.

(N B There are also ten powers of Bodhisattvas)

5. ONE MOMENT, OR 60 'SETSUNA'

The sixtieth (or ninetieth) part of one thought During this moment ninety persons are born and die. (It is supposed to be the 4,500th part of a time second)

Alternatively ICHI NEN is the 'One Cry made to the Buddha'. It is the 'One Thought Activity'.

Or again it is the ONE THOUGHT OF FAITH, the first instant in the rise of faith It is not having two contrary thoughts about Amida Buddha

6 THE THREE POISONS

Or the three delusions which poison the 'good roots or causes'. They are AVARICE, ANGER, IGNORANCE

7. THE TEN EVILS OR SINS

These are-

(i) Sins committed by the body—killing, stealing, fornication

NOTES FOR THE 'SERMONS'

1 ABSOLUTE REALITY

One of the SEVEN real aspects of things REALITY. This real aspect appears when human dharmas are put aside

The SEVEN 'REALITIES' are

- (i) The reality of the relation between the body and nature (which is connected with the wheel of life-death)
- (ii) The real aspect of things when the human dharmas are put aside
- (iii) The reality that all phenomena are but the changing appearance of mind
- (iv) The reality that all the activities of sentient beings are based harmoniously upon the essence of ultimate reality
- (v) The reality of illusions and false activities which are in some way dependent upon ultimate reality itself
- (vi) The reality of the purity of the nature of reality itself
- (vii) The reality of Buddha's teaching about the Six Paramitas, which are based on ultimate reality

2 PRIMARY BUDDHA NATURE

THAT WHICH EXISTS OF ITSELF, by its very nature—'a priori'.

Or alternatively

One of the SHI U or FOUR existences—the body which exists between birth and death *This is the cause or origin of the creation of activity*

The SHI U or FOUR existences are four divisions or classes of sentient beings or stages in their duration between their life and their death

3 ZENDO'S KWAN KYO

A Gatha or sacred verse which occurs at the beginning of the Kwan kyo scripture by Zendo (613-681). Zendo was founder of the Pure Land (Jodo) sect in China. He taught the 'Nem Butsu' or prayer of recollection to the Buddha. The opening stanza of his scripture is a call to venerate the three treasures (Buddha, Law and the Order). There are fourteen lines of five words in each stanza and fifty-six stanzas altogether.

4 THE TEN POWERS

These are possessed by every Buddha. They are variously enumerated

ing Only Maha Kasyapa understood. This is the original story of the 'Shoho Ganzo Nehan Nyoshi' or direct law of vision—the wonder heart of the Buddha coming direct from heart to heart with out words

12. THE FIVE DUTIES

These are: *almsgiving; obedience to the rules, patience, ascetic practice, meditation.*

Or the FIVE WORKS OF BODHISATTVAS, which are: *obedience to the rules; meditation, wisdom, saving others and sympathy with the sick.*

13. EMBU DANGON

The Japanese name for the river full of golden sand, which flows under the Jambu (Embu) Tree The Land through which this river flows is the continent where there are less pleasures to be enjoyed than in the other two continents of the Buddhist Universe, but this (Jambu) continent surpasses the others in real joy because it is here *only that men may meet the Buddha and listen to him*

14. NON SELF

GA means a continuous, controlling principle which seems to us to be a combination of the five skandhas in a temporary body—a real perpetual controlling principle which constitutes our 'Self' Therefore we have the idea of a real 'EGO'. But there is no place in our bodies for such a controlling principle, there is no precise, real self, by any combination of the skandhas, nor is there any controlling principle apart from or unconnected with the skandhas.

Moreover even the dharmas are not real existences in themselves, i e there is no real existence of phenomena, nor of feelings—all these are but combinations of skandhas And they do not exist apart from the skandhas

15 NON ATTACHMENT

The condition of being entirely separated from all attachment to things, having no more fondness or desire for them

The condition of knowing that all things are but phantasms or illusions.

The term is also used for that class of Bodhisattvas who perceive the void with their hearts still in the world of the non absolute (before entering Nirvana) Alternatively the word means absence of form and colour.

16 NON SEPARATIVE-CYCLE

This is the opposite of RIREKI which means 'Separation'. Ennyo

- (ii) Sins committed by the mouth—lying, flattery, slanderous words, double tongue
 (iii) Sins committed by the will—anger, ignorance

8 ACHARIAS

A title of honour given to those who have finished the novitiate. A teacher who elevates the morals of his pupils, or whose conduct is correct.

In Japan, since 836 (Seiwa 3), in the reign of the Emperor Nimmei, this was the title given to an office held by the priests of the 'Seven High Mountain Temples' (Hiei, Hira, Ibuki, Atago, Shimo, Kumbo and Katsuki), where the mystic doctrines were held, with the head quarters at Hiei San.

9 SANDAL WOOD

A scented forest tree. It has red, white and purple varieties, which heal sickness. As soon as even a few of the leaves of this tree begin to unfold, the evil odours of evil forests are overcome. It is especially good for dropsy. Probably the sandal wood tree.

10 THE THREE THOUSAND WORLDS

The phrase occurs in the long AGAMA.

There is the LITTLE WORLD, the MIDDLE WORLD and the GREAT WORLD.

The LITTLE WORLD is made up of one thousand of the following: (i) Sun and moon world, Mount Sumeru, (ii) the four heavens; (iii) the great heaven on Mount Sumeru's sides, (iv) thirty three heavens with thirty three classes of inhabitants, (v) Yama's heaven and the Tosotsu (Tusita) heaven. The fifth of the six worlds of desire where the inhabitants enjoy the five lusts. Here life is long and men's bodies are large, (vi) the sixth world of desire where the king is Mara (Taima in Japanese), (vii) Brahma loka—the eighteen heavenly mansions, constituting the world of form, with the four regions of contemplation.

The MIDDLE WORLD, composed of one thousand of the LITTLE WORLDS.

The GREAT WORLD, composed of one thousand of the MIDDLE WORLDS.

11 SMILE—THE PLUCKED FLOWER SMILE

This refers to the famous episode, when Sakyamuni on the Vulture Peak received a red flower from Brahma and used it instead of preach

SERMONS TO PARISHIONERS

a double tongue, do not use abusive language, do not flatter, do not be avaricious, do not be wrathful, do not have false views

24 THE FIVE RULES

The five rules for those who live in their homes and have not 'retired' from the world (into the temple life)· do not kill, do not steal, do not commit fornication, do not speak recklessly, do not drink intoxicating liquors

25 SIX ROOTS

Purifying the six roots or senses Cutting off all attachments to the six senses Attain to the 800 merits of sight, the 1,200 merits of hearing, the 800 merits of the sense of smell, the 1,200 merits of the mouth, the 800 merits of the body and the 1,200 merits of the mind activities Thus all the senses being pure may work together in harmony to remove all hindrances to progress towards Nirvana

26 THE FIVE HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

These are parent and child, lord and retainer, husband and wife, brothers (younger and older) and friends

27 THE FIVE ETERNAL VIRTUES

These are benevolence, reasonableness (or righteousness which controls according to goodness), propriety, fidelity, wisdom

28 THE TEN ATTENDANT KINGS, in whose courts the dead have to appear for seventy seven days, and then every seven days, every hundred days and every first anniversary of death and the third anniversary also, in order to receive sentence

The Kings are Fudo Myo-o (Achala), Shaka, called SHAKO, Monju, Fūken, Emma, Miroku Yakushi, Kwannon, Seishi, and Amida (Their names in Hades Taiko, Shako, Sotai-o, Gokar-o, Jizo, Henkai-o, Daisan-o, Heisho o Toshi-o and Go-do Tenrin-o)

29 THREE RAPIDS

The river which flows by the court of the King Taiko (Fudo, see note 28 above), along the banks of which the dead have to follow for seven days after death There are three rapids in this river, where it has to be crossed These rapids are fixed by the deeds of the dead persons during their life time At the source of the river are Ken-i-o and Fun-i-ba, two deities who seize the clothes of the dead and hang them up on a tree The tree is called Irei ju

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

means, therefore, connectedness Non separation Close connection of reality with objects, and of objects with each other

17 UNIVERSE WHERE REALITY AND PHENOMENA ARE JOINED

One of the four law worlds The universe as seen in its aspect of connectedness but without contact between reality and phenomena

18 LAND OF NO BIRTH

Nothing is born by the power of some other, or by one's own power The word is also used of ARHATS—those who will not be reborn in the life of illusion

19 ANNIHILATION

Entry into the calm of Nirvana where for the first time real happiness is found

20 THE SEVEN BUDDHAS of whom six were fore-runners of Sakya muni

They are Vipasyin, S'ikhin, Vis'vabhu, (these three were Buddhas of the previous kalpa era), Krakuchanda Kanakamuni, Kasyapa and Sakyamuni (these four are of the present kalpa era) All have now entered Nirvana

21 I RO HA NI

This syllabary is a poem, attributed to Kobo Taishi Roughly translated it means

Though 'colour' may be fragrant,
It scatters and is dispersed
This world of ours
Is impermanent in every one's case
We cross the distant mountains today
And see nothing but a shallow dream,
But we do not become inebriated with it

22 THE EIGHT FALSITIES, opposed to the True

They are false ideas concerning life, destruction, the past the future; the one; variety or change the bringing to an end, and permanence

23 TEN RULES

Also called JU ZEN KAI The Ten Rules for Novices

kill not, steal not; tell no lies commit no fornication, do not have

Buddha and was transformed into a boy, and then became a Buddha in the southern continent of the universe (In the Devadatta section of the *Saddharma*—the *Taiba Hon*, mentioned above which is the twelfth out of twenty four sections) The story goes that Buddha states that on account of his wisdom Devadatta will, after countless future ages, become the Deva King (Tenno Tathagata) After Deva datta leaves, Manjusri comes up from the Dragon King's palace under the sea and announces to the Bodhisattva Akshobya (or Jnanakaya) that the daughter of the Dragon King has attained to Buddhahood at the age of eight Immediately the child appears, does reverence to the Buddha and turns into a boy and then goes to Vimala in the South where she becomes a Buddha

37. AJASE (c 500 B C), son of King Bimbisara of Magadha

Egged on by Devadatta, he killed his father and seized power over central India Later he was converted to Buddhism and became a king of almsgiving He was patron of the first Great Council and died twenty four years after Sakyamuni

Itaike (Vaidehi) was his mother She was imprisoned by her son in the 'Seven fold prison She became so disenamoured of the world that she asked Sakyamuni to teach her from his Vulture Peak The Buddha went from his assembly on that mountain and in her prison discoursed to her, thus producing the *Amitayur Dhyana Sutra* (Muryo Jukyo)

In this *Amitayur Sutra* the lady, Vaidehi (Itaike) asked the Buddha 'Please teach me "SHIYUI" Please teach me "SHOJU"'

These two terms are of frequent occurrence in Hakuin's and other Zen works

SHIYUI is the first part of the 'Accommodation' teaching about meditation It signifies the bringing into one's mind thoughts of sublimity about the pure land

SHOJU is the real (not accommodated) meditation, in which the thoughts become clearer and more detached so that all relative and 'learned' imaginations are put to rest and the meditating mind alone remains All the objects of sense are harmonized and made to correspond with Samadhi until the pure land is seen in all its real purity In the Shinshu sect, Shiyui is entry into faith by the gate of 'Self power' or reliance, while Shoju is the true mind of the diamond unbreakable, Vow of Amida—reliance upon Amida's power

38 THE FIVE OBSTACLES TO WOMEN (mentioned in the *Saddharma Pundarika*)

A woman can not become a Ten Rin O nor a lord of the three

30 PURE CRYSTAL MIRROR (in the court of the King of Hell)

The dead who look into it, see all the good and evil things which they did during their previous life

31 THE ONE HUNDRED-AND-THIRTY SIX DIVISIONS OF HELL

Jigoku hell is situated under the Jambu dvina (or southern) continent of the universe Each of the hot hells has four gates There are eight hot hells Outside each gate are four ante-chamber hells, thus making 136 hot hells

32 THE SWORD MOUNTAIN

A mountain in hell on which swords have been fixed The wardens of hell bring sinners here and cut off their limbs Or a beautiful woman appears on the top of the hill and invites the sinner to climb up to her When he does so she disappears and reappears at the bottom of the hill and so on But each time a limb is cut off at the top and the bottom of the hill from the sinner The idea of the Sword Mountain does not come from any of the scriptures Perhaps it has been developed from the ideas of the Sword Road and the Forest of Sword Leaves and the Iron Thorn Forest which are mentioned as connected with the development of the long period or kalpas of disintegration of the universes

33 THE BLACK ROPE

The second of the hot hells Here sinners are bound with hot iron ropes and then cut to pieces with hot iron axes Murderers and those who strangle people (with ropes) and those who burgle money come to this hell

34 THE LAKE OF BLOOD into which sinful women fall

This is not mentioned in the Scriptures

35 ALARA KALARA for Alara Karan signifying Alara Kalama

A hermit who lived near Vaisali (Bishajo in Japanese) When Sakyamuni left Bhagava (BagaSan in Japanese) he went to this hermit for instruction In later times the one man was believed to be two (as here)

36 THE DAUGHTER OF SAGARA the Dragon King.

The legend comes in the Taiba Hon section of the Saddharma Pundarika At eight years her wisdom was so great that she understood the teaching of Manjusri (Monju) She appeared in front of the

nature of the dharmas Those who understand the working of the laws of karma obtain this wisdom Such persons are called 'Kendo', Seers of the Way Amida controls this wisdom

(v) The discernment which, having attained to Buddhahood, turns away from the Five Sense-Consciousnesses and, in order to bring joyful benefits to all sentient beings, teaches the various accommodated truths as well as the ultimate truth, Fukujoju is the Buddha who controls this wisdom

These five wisdoms are distributed or 'married to' the six 'Great Fundamentals' which compose the body (earth, fire, etc., and consciousness itself), of which the first five belong to the womb world and the sixth belongs to the diamond world

They are also 'married' to the five Buddhas mentioned above Vairochana is the centre of the Diamond The others Ashiku (Akshobya), Hosho (Ratnasambhava) Kekaifu (Amoghasiddhi), and Amida (Amitabha) belong to the Womb World

The FIVE WISDOMS are also interpreted as

- (i) Wisdom of ordinary mortals
- (ii) Wisdom of Sravakas (beginners)
- (iii) Wisdom of Pratyeka Buddhas
- (iv) Wisdom of Bodhisattvas
- (v) Wisdom of Buddha

Also there are five degrees of Buddha's wisdom

His wisdom 'in toto' (general) His wonderful wisdom, His inexpressible wisdom, His great vehicle wisdom and His incomparable wisdom

44 FORTY YEARS

This phrase occurs in the prologue to the Lotus Sutra which has three sections, on virtue, preaching and merit It tells how Sakyamuni, after completing the 'Way' for more than forty years taught only accommodated truth

45 THE SIX SYLLABLE NAME—NA MU A MI DA BUTSU

This occurs in the Amitayur-dhyana Sutra (Kwan Muryoju Kyo) The name of Amida called upon for salvation

46 HENJAKU

The name of a famous Chinese physician who lived in the fourth century, A.D.

47 KIBA

An illegitimate son of King Bumbisara He gave up his claim to suc

THE EMBOSSED TEA KETTLE

worlds (Bonten-O in Japanese) nor a Taishaku, (protector of Buddhist believers) nor an Emma, king of hell nor Buddha

39 THE THREE OBEDIENCES

A woman, as a child must obey her father, when married, her husband as a widow, her son

40 THE FIVE OBSTACLES

Hindrances to faith (doubt) to progress (laziness) to thought (anger) to meditation (envy) to wisdom (ignorance and anger)

41 ANOKUTARA

Abbreviation for ANUTTARA SAMYAK SAMBODHI A phrase used as a name for Buddha's perfected universal, supreme Wisdom It had magic potency

42 RA

One of the fifty Sanskrit sounds It represents the individual separate dharmas—the 'dust' It is said to be the tone of voice of joy and victory over 'non joy'

43 THE FIVE WISDOMS

CHI, or wisdom activity of the mind which discriminates between right and wrong good and evil Sometimes it is classified in two divisions (NI-CHI) wisdom which perceives reality and wisdom which perceives phenomena Sometimes it is in three divisions the wisdom of ordinary 'world liners', wisdom of those who leave the world and the wisdom of Bodhisattvas and Buddhas The five wisdoms are those which are connected with the operation (or 'turning') of the 'Nine Sense-Consciousnesses'

These five wisdoms are

(i) Wisdom which discerns the real nature of the dharmas (Ho-kai no Tai Sho-Chi)

(ii) The discerning of all phenomena as if reflected in a mirror (Dai Enkyo-Chi) This wisdom is controlled by the Buddha Ashiku

(iii) The discernment of the identity (or equality) of 'this and that'—all objects (Byodo Sho-Chi) Hosho is the Buddha who controls this wisdom

(iv) The discernment which cuts away doubts as to the law, and which distinguishes between true and false teaching (Myok wanzatsu-Chi) This comes by turning away from the Six Sense-Consciousnesses and by perceiving the 'Self Nature' united with the

nature of the ~~diamond~~. Those who understand the working of the laws of karma obtain this wisdom. Such persons are called 'Kendo', Seers of the Way. Amida controls this wisdom.

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52 WESTERN COUNTIES

The pilgrimage to the thirty three shrines of Kwannon, where each image has special features, e.g. a thousand hands, or eleven faces, or is holding the sacred jewel, etc

53 FOUR PROVINCES

The pilgrimage to the eighty eight shrines in the island of Shikoku, which are connected with Kobo Taishi

54 LONG NOSED GOBLIN (TENGU)

Various meanings are attached to this word

(i) It is sometimes the name of a constellation

(ii) It is interpreted as meaning 'Light and Darkness'

'TEN' (Heaven) symbolizing Kwomyo bright light, and so the enlightenment which is the fruit of Buddha hood, and 'GU' the darkness of folly, or the result of existence as a sentient being or

(iii) 'TEN' is combined with Mandara and 'GU' with Chi (Earth) mandara, implying the diamond world and the womb world (The Shingon sect symbolic usage)

(iv) Any followers of Emma, King of Hell

In the NIHONGI, the ideogram 'GU' is interpreted as 'kitsune' (fox) and the word TENGU is read as Heavenly Fox (Ama kitsune)

This is a mythical animal supposed to live in the mountains, with a body like a badger, a white head, eating snakes, or nowadays it is supposed to have represented a mystical mythical creature with human form ghostlike, speaking strange oracles, with a long nose and with wings with which it is always flying about

55 KEDATSU

There were two priests of this name

(i) JOKYO (1155-1213) the son of Fujiwara Shokei a priest of the Hosso-shu, famous as a teacher

(ii) RYOZEN (1048-1139) a Shingon priest who built many temples

56 FORTY NINE BENDS

The forty nine days immediately after death, when special requiem ceremonies were performed at the temple of the deceased

57 TWO POWERS

KON is the power of becoming the 'root' of things

KI is the activity

KONKI therefore, means the power actively to practise the discipline after hearing the Law

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58 WA SAN

Poems composed in the Japanese language, in praise of the Buddha
 (i) For the purpose of explaining the Scriptures to those who are entirely ignorant of them

(ii) For singing or chanting by groups of devotees

The best known of these are by Genshin (942-1017) a Tendai priest, whose title was Eshin Soza, and by Senkwan (918-983) whose Wa san were in praise of Amida's pure land. Shinran composed his Wa-san when he was seventy six years of age. Some of his poems were in praise of the Patriarchs from Nagarjuna (Ryuju) to Genku, (117 poems) and some are known as the Shozo Matsu Wa san, which Shinran composed when he was eighty six, after seeing a dream or vision. These were in praise of Amida and Shaka (Sakya muni) for producing faith in us mortals (Shinran's date is 1173-1262. He is the Founder of the Shinshu sect.)

59 RICH MAN

The name given to rich people in India. The reference, however, is to the parable of the conflagration in the rich man's house, when he brought out various little vehicles drawn by different sorts of animals to save his children from the fire. The vehicles represent the different forms of the Buddha's teaching. The parable occurs in the Saddharma Pundarika

(There are many synonyms for 'CHOJA')

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